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ABSTRACT

This unit, designed for use with high school and community college students, features a collection of literature about youths and young adults in contemporary China. Consisting of eight lessons, lessons 1 to 3 are introductory activities relating to Chinese youths and values. Lesson 4 presents excerpts from a Chinese collection of 100 life profiles; the four personalities chosen here reflect different experiences and outlooks on life. Lessons 5 and 6 introduce students to short stories by well-known contemporary Chinese writers. Lesson 7 and 8 present plays written by U.S. teachers. The unit concludes with a review and evaluation section that is appropriate for use in a variety of courses including those dealing with China, literature, values, youth, and social change. (DB)

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VALUES IN CONFLICT

LITERATURE ON CHINA'S YOUTH

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STANFORD PROGRAM ON INTERNATIONAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATION

SPICE

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The Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE) represents a long-term effort by Stanford University to improve international and cross-cultural education in elementary and secondary schools. The program traces its origins to 1973 with the initiation of the Bay Area China Education Project, an effort to upgrade teaching about the People's Republic of China. Subsequently, parallel projects on Japan, Africa, Latin America, International Security and Arms Control, Western Europe, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were established, and together with the China Project, became the nucleus of SPICE. SPICE also offers services in the fields of geography and foreign language.

In 1979, SPICE joined with two other international resource organizations–The World Affairs Council of Northern California and Global Educators–to form the Bay Area Global Education Program (BAGEP), an international studies resource consortium serving K-12 schools and districts in the San Francisco area. In 1986, Stanford University, in cooperation with the World Affairs Council and Global Educators, was selected to manage the California International Studies Project (CISP), a legislatively-based (AB 2543) statewide network of international resource centers for which BAGEP serves as a model. SPICE is the curriculum development and materials resource arm of CISP.

Sponsorship

SPICE is sponsored by the Institute for International Studies and the School of Education at Stanford University.

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SPICE receives support from federal sources, private foundations, and the Institute for International Studies.

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VALUES IN CONFLICT: LITERATURE ON CHINA'S YOUTH

High School and Junior College

The China Project
of the
Stanford Program on International
and Cross-Cultural Education
(SPICE)

THE CHINA PROJECT/SPICE

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PREFACE

During the summer of 1986, through funding provided by a Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad award from the Department of Education, the China Project/SPICE and the California International Studies Project (CISP) sponsored a six week tour to the People's Republic of China for sixteen outstanding California pre-collegiate level teachers and administrators. The purpose of the trip was to experience China first hand and to develop materials. The goal was to develop a series of new units on post-Mao China, one being the present volume.

Curriculum development was integrated into every phase of the project -- during pre-departure orientations, during the academic programs in the Northeast Normal University, Beijing Normal University, and East China Normal University, and in a week-long writing workshop in Hong Kong at the end of the trip. During the sixteen months after returning, the new materials underwent numerous revisions and were thoroughly field-tested. It is particularly exciting that all publications in this series resulted from close collaboration between the China Project/SPICE staff and study tour group members, with the latter being the prime contributors to authorship.

My heartfelt thanks to the extraordinary group of individuals who participated in the China trip -- in many ways their comraderie and talent made the trip. Their commitment towards the curriculum projects, especially after the trip, is certainly above the call of duty and deeply appreciated. Many of us shall especially cherish the lasting friendships that were formed. Special recognition should be given to Susan Kroeger, Stan Seaberg, and Lee Torliatt for initial editorial work, to Sally Clark and Carol Murphey for wonderful slides and graphics respectively, to Professor Lynn Paine of Michigan State University for valuable assistance in Changchun, to Stephney Keyser and Lungching Chiao from the Department of Education for assistance during proposal writing, and to the many teachers who field-tested the materials and provided valuable feedback. Special thanks also to our Chinese friends, and to Dr. Ron Herring, Tuckie Yirchott, and Bing Shaw for assistance with getting the study tour off the ground. However, the greatest debt is to former SPICE Director Dr. David Grossman who was personally involved with many phases of the project. His continual support made certain that these new curriculum units would materialize.

Michael Chang
Coordinator,
China Project/SPICE

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INTRODUCTION

Values in Conflict is a lively collection of literature on youths and young adults in post-Mao China. The period since the death of Mao in 1976 has been distinguished by far-reaching economic reforms in the People's Republic of China. The present policy emphasis on increasing production through individual incentives stands in marked contrast to the radical egalitarian ideas which characterized Maoist policies during the Cultural Revolution period (1966-76). The result has been a substantial increase in productivity, accompanied by rapid social change. Many Chinese, especially young people, find themselves caught in a vast array of conflicting values: traditional values, Maoist values, western values, as well as non-Maoist socialist values which are gradually evolving under the present leadership. This curriculum unit explores the diverse Chinese responses to these values during this period of change.

This unit consists of eight lessons. Lessons 1 to 3 are introductory activities relating to Chinese youths and values. Lesson 4 presents excerpts from a Chinese collection of a hundred life profiles; the four personalities chosen here reflect different experiences and outlooks in life. Lessons 5 and 6 introduce students to short stories by well-known contemporary Chinese writers. Again the three stories in Lesson 6 reflect different value orientations among young people in China today. Lesson 7 and 8 present plays written by American teachers. Based on Chinese sources, the performance of these plays can further increase student interest. The longer lessons 5 and 8 both provide a glimpse into the social upheaval of the Cultural Revolution period. The unit concludes with lesson 9 which asks students to review and summarize what they have learned.

Values in Conflict is suitable for use at the high school and junior college levels. It is particularly appropriate for courses dealing with China, literature, values, youth, or social change. If desired, teachers will find it possible to use selected lessons according to the particular needs of their courses.

LESSON 1
PERCEPTIONS OF CHINA

INTRODUCTION

One of the most dynamic countries entering the international arena is China. This large and important society is little understood in the western world partly because our contact with China has been limited for many years and partly because our perceptions have not kept pace with rapid changes in Chinese society. In this short introductory lesson, students examine their initial perceptions about CHina.

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will:

1. Identify and examine their perceptions of China.
2. Establish a reference framework for the study of post-Mao China.

TEACHING TIME one class period

PROCEDURE

1. Ask students to divide a piece of paper into two sections. On one section ask them to write one adjective that comes to mind immediately when they hear the words "China" or "Chinese". Ask them to do the same with the words "America" or "Americans" on the other section.

2. List on the board what students have written and prepare two lists of the ten most recurring responses.

DEBRIEFING

1. How are the two final lists different? The same?

2. What most surprised the students about their perceptions?

3. From what source did they get their perceptions or impressions? (Parents, television, films, books, experiences,)

4. Ask the class if they know what a "stereotype" is. Tell students that the Webster Dictionary defines a stereotype as, "a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, affective attitude, or uncritical judgement." Note also that stereotypes often contain a kernel of truth; but that images and ideas become stereotypes when they are generalized too broadly or when they are taken as the whole truth.

5. Which perceptions on the initial lists might be stereotypes?

Why? How might stereotypes be harmful?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Use SPICE unit "Misunderstanding China" to supplement Lesson

2. How might a Chinese student view Americans? Prepare a list of images and perceptions which a young Chinese might have of America or Americans. What would some of their stereotypes be?

3. Spend an evening watching TV. Make a list of the values portrayed on popular advertising and programming. Identify ethnic stereotypes and images.

LESSON 2
AMERICAN AND CHINESE YOUTHS

INTRODUCTION

By comparing Chinese student responses to a questionnaire with their own responses, students gain a better understanding of both cultures.

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will:

1. Develop an awareness of their own values.
2. Be introduced to the values of some Chinese students.
3. Become aware of the diversity of views held by both American and Chinese students.

TEACHING TIME One class period

MATERIALS

Student Questionnaire (Handout 1)
Chinese Student Responses (Handout 2)
Two Chinese Youths (Handout 3)

PROCEDURES

1. Distribute "Student Questionnaire" (Handout 1) and ask students to complete in class.

2. Go through the questionnaire with the class and list on the board the most frequent responses to each question. What were the most common responses? What were the least common responses? Were there questions that were particularly difficult to answer?

3. Distribute "Chinese Student Responses" (Handout 2).

DEBRIEFING

1. Ask students to compare the two sets of responses. How are they different? Similar? Ask students what insights about the values of youth in the U.S. and China did they gain from this activity. Help students recognize that the Chinese have a somewhat different, but equally cogent and valid, cultural system.

2. Remind students that although we live in the same culture, our answers to the questionnaire reflected many different opinions, values, likes and dislikes. The same is true for Chinese students and therefore they should be careful not to create stereotypes of them (see lesson one).

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

1. Distribute "Two Chinese Youths" (Handout 3). Ask students to write a letter to one of the Chinese youths.

HANDOUT 1

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your favorite leisure activity?

2. Who do you respect/admire? Why?

3. What is your most important goal in life?

4. What are your parents' most important goals?

5. Who do you talk to for advice?

6. After you secure a job, what will be your first significant purchase?

HANDOUT 2

CHINESE STUDENT RESPONSES

1. What is your favorite leisure activity?
   Volleyball; badminton; swimming; skating; watching TV; reading novels; going to movies; playing chess; soccer.

2. Who do you respect/admire? Why?
   Zhou Enlai (former Prime Minister); Deng Xiaoping (political leader); Lu Xun (novelist); Napoleon; Madame Curie.

3. What is your most important goal in life?
   To serve the people; to be a useful person; to study for my country; to be a scientist; to be accepted to university; to do something for science; to study in America; to become an engineer.

4. What are your parents' most important goals?
   To get me into university; to work hard for the modernization of China.

5. Who do you talk to for advice?
   Parents; classmates; teachers.

6. After you secure a job, what will be your first significant purchase?
   Clothes; books; buy my mother a chicken; buy something for my parents; to eat out with friends; make a special soup for my grandmother; buy gifts.

TWO CHINESE YOUTHS

MEI HUA -- A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

Mei Hua is a high school student in a key* school in Beijing. She lives in a three room apartment with her mother, father and grandmother. Her mother is a doctor at the Number 6 hospital in Beijing, where she uses traditional and modern methods in her practice. Her father is studying engineering at the university. During the Cultural Revolution, he had to labor in a factory and could not finish his studies because all the universities were closed.

When Mei has a problem, she talks to her father, mother and friends. Sometimes she wishes her family would give her more freedom. Mei enjoys reading, playing badminton and watching television. Besides Chinese, learning to speak English is very important to her --so important, in fact, that she visits the park on Sundays in order to practice with English-speaking foreigners.

She respects Deng Xiaoping, the leader of the Chinese government, and Lu Xun, a famous writer of the 20th century. Her most important goal is to prepare for the university entrance exam. If she is fortunate to be one of the fewer than 10% of the applicants who pass, she will study for four years and then be placed in a job which the government chooses for her. Mei feels excited about China's direction today and is dedicated to working hard for her country in order to reach full modernization.

DA HU -- A YOUNG COOK

Mr. Da Hu, who grew up in the countryside, has worked at Shanghai Normal University as a cook for the past two years. His late father, who used to drive a truck from the village to the city delivering produce, helped Da Hu find this job after his completion of the lower middle school (9th grade). Because he's a cook at the university, a room is provided for him which he shares with three other roommates. He enjoys the camaraderie of the other single workers and feels comfortable enough with the leader of his work unit to discuss personal problems with him.

In his leisure time Da enjoys reading, shopping and playing soccer. He particularly admires the Chinese national women's volleyball team.

Although Da does not consider himself politically active, he does believe that one of the strengths of China is its concern about and respect for poor people.

Da is engaged and is saving his money to buy a TV set and a refrigerator before his marriage. He and his prospective wife are looking forward to having one child. They wish they could have more children but understand the reason for the government's one-child policy. Following the usual custom, they have invited his mother to live with them, but she prefers the countryside, finding Shanghai,** a city of 12 million, too busy.

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* A key school is one that receives special funding.

** Shanghai is China's major port and a premier center of trade and industry. Shanghai has a population of 11 million inhabitants with about six to seven million inhabitants living in the city proper in an area of approximately 55 square miles.

LESSON 3
AMERICAN AND CHINESE VALUES

INTRODUCTION

Most citizens of a particular country share a common core of values based on their history and culture. This lesson explores some American and Chinese values.

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will:

1. Gain some understanding of American and Chinese cultural values.
2. Gain insight into how American and Chinese might respond differently in a given situation.

TEACHING TIME One class period

MATERIALS

Background Material
Four Scenarios (Handout 4)

PROCEDURE

1. Use the background material to introduce some differences in values between American and Chinese cultures.

2. Distribute "Four Scenarios" (Handout 4) and divide the class into groups of three.

3. Have an equal number of groups discuss each scenario. Each group has to agree on a solution.

4. Go through each scenario as a class and ask for different solutions to each scenario. A representative from each group will explain how they reached their conclusion.

DEBRIEFING

1. What values are evident from student responses?

2. Based on what students have heard about American and Chinese cultural values, what do they think some Chinese responses to the scenarios would be?

3. Remind students of their disagreements in arriving at a conclusion. What does this tell us about assuming too quickly what a Chinese answer might be?

BACKGROUND MATERIAL
AMERICAN AND CHINESE VALUES

AMERICAN/CHINESE VALUES

Most citizens of a particular country share a common core of values and beliefs based on their history and culture. Ethnocentrism, a narrow conviction about the superiority of one's own culture, often leads to conflict. Cross-cultural sensitivity -- appreciating both similarities and differences -- marks the beginning of understanding. We understand those values which we share with the people of other countries; in order to understand those values which are different we must understand our own values as well as those of the people we are studying. Four contrasts between Chinese and American cultures which we will highlight are areas of possible misunderstanding.

INDIVIDUALISM VERSUS GROUP ORIENTATION

Individualism, a concept originating during the renaissance, has long flourished in the United States. Here, each person is encouraged to seek his/her unique place in society. Lyrics to songs speak of the glorious individual. In the average desk dictionary, there are more than 100 words having "self" as a prefix -- words like self-confidence, self-conscious, self-control, self-deception, self-defeating, self-importance and self-interest. The equivalent of these words cannot be found in most other languages. The "self-made" person is very much a part of our American society today.

In China the welfare of the group is emphasized over that of the individual. Chinese are concerned with how individual actions affect the welfare of family, work unit, neighborhood, and country. One's role in groups and in the larger society is of central concern. This is as true in modern as in traditional Chinese society. For example, both marriage and divorce are important to the family, neighborhood and work unit. To go against the judgement of the group would make the decision difficult for the individuals concerned. One may have more individual choice today than in the past, but group approval of individual decision-making is still very important.

PRIVACY VERSUS TOGETHERNESS

The right to privacy and the need to be alone, important and honored traits in the United States, are not prevalent in China. For the Chinese, these traits might represent loneliness and isolation from the group. A visiting American, wishing to be alone for a while, might choose to sit by him/herself on a bus; out of courtesy, a well-meaning Chinese might sit next to him/her. The American, in turn, might interpret this act of kindness as an intrusion on his/her privacy.

FORMALITY VERSUS INFORMALITY

The Chinese are far more aware of one's place and position in society than Americans. For example, Chinese take into consideration one's professional achievements as well as the background of one's parents in determining an appropriate introduction. Americans, under the same circumstances, might act in a casual, informal manner. In America, supervisors often urge their employees to call them by their first names. In China this informality would be unlikely. In our greetings, we usually say "hi" instead of a more formal "How are you?". Visitors to America from China may be insulted by American informality, whereas Americans may see such casual behavior as a compliment. Conversely we may experience Chinese formality as stuffy and placing too much emphasis on external titles.

DIRECTNESS VERSUS INDIRECTNESS

The manner of handling unpleasant situations is another area of difference between Chinese and Americans. Americans usually prefer a direct and open approach. We may consider indirect people to be weak and dishonest and may quickly lose confidence in them. Americans frequently miss or ignore information that is being shared indirectly. Chinese are more indirect. They may hint at what is intended rather than saying it outright. This subtle style of conveying unpleasant information enables the listener to "get the message" without taking the information as a personal insult. The individual can more easily "save face," a highly regarded value in China.

HANDOUT 4

FOUR SCENARIOS

1. The president of your parents´ business or university (or the son/daughter of an important TV script writer) is visiting your home for dinner. How will you act or dress differently?

2. Friends are visiting you to watch a video. You are last to enter the room. You have a choice of sitting on the same sofa with your friend or separately in a chair. Both allow equal viewing of the TV. Which one would you choose and why?

3. You are leaving a movie with a close friend you haven´t seen in a long time. He/She invites you to a restaurant for a snack. You feel tired and wish to go home. How would you react?

4. You are a member of a soccer team. Recently the coach has not been pleased with your performance and you are concerned that you might lose your starting position. During the game you had an opportunity to attempt a goal. If you make the shot, you think the coach will be pleased and your position as a starter may be more secure. At the same time you notice a teammate who has a better angle to the goal. Should you pass to a teammate or take the shot yourself?

LESSON 4
FOUR LIFE PROFILES

INTRODUCTION

The four profiles in this lesson were written by Zhang Xinxin and Sang Ye. In the words of the authors: "These short profiles are from a collection which aims to present the experiences and attitudes of a hundred Chinese from different walks of life...The hundred subjects chosen are not all 'typical characters'. Their ideas, lives, and hopes may fall short of reflecting the reforms now taking place in the economy. All the same, they still illustrate something of this irresistible trend."

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be introduced to Chinese talking about themselves.
2. Students will examine the hopes and values of four Chinese.

TEACHING TIME one to two class periods

MATERIALS

Mrs. X: 58 Years Old (Handout 5)
Zhang Baojian: 29 Years Old (Handout 6)
Luo Bin: 19 Years Old (Handout 7)
Yang Shouqian: 19 Years Old (Handout 8)

PROCEDURES

1. Divide the class into groups of three or four. Distribute a Chinese profile to each group.

2. Each group then asks one person to read the profile.

3. Each group will work together in identifying the values and hopes expressed in the profile.

DEBRIEFING

1. Ask a student to read the profile to the entire class.

2. Ask groups who worked on that profile to report on what values and hopes were expressed.

3. Discuss with the class their reaction to the profile.

4. Repeat process with remaining profiles.

5. Have students compare the different profiles.

HOMEWORK

Ask students to write an interesting profile of someone.

HANDOUT 5

MRS. X

"Yes, I've just contributed five hundred yuan to repair the Great Wall. It's not worth talking about. Since we in China have this Great Wall, I'm glad to contribute to it's repair. Besides, I can afford it.

No, I honestly don't want to talk about it. I'm completely unprepared, what could I say?

Well then...all right, we can have a friendly chat, but don't consider it an interview. No, I've no other scruples, I'm certainly not afraid of any trouble; I just feel I should first ask the higher-ups. And since we're just chatting, don't publish my name, will you? Sorry!

These last few years our economy has gotten on the right track, and there's more public fund-raising, which is a good thing, it alerts the general public to problems deserving attention. For instance, when organizations keen on preserving cultural relics launch this appeal, it's a good education for the rest of our people. How many of our billion people can make contributions? Not too many I imagine. The starting figure's too high -- five hundred or more to have your name engraved, that's too much for ordinary people. Still this drive should at least have the effect of making everyone treasure the Great Wall and take better care of it. They should realize that they mustn't pull it down. Not now that the authorities and private individuals are raising funds to repair it!

I consider that our generation owes something to the Great Wall, and to pay our debt we ought to contribute our money or our strength, whichever we have. In 1977 my daughter passed the college entrance and I went to Gubeikou outside Beijing to fetch her back to town. She'd been working in a commune there for six years. When I reached the village where she lived I was staggered; all the bricks in their houses, pigsties and public toilets had come from the Great Wall! My, that was their idea of "self-reliance" and of construction "in line with local conditions." I understood then why, all along the way, the Great Wall had been reduced to mounds of earth! My daughter said, "The villagers aren't the worst. If you don't believe me go and look at the army. They send trucks and sappers to dismantle the Wall." Can you believe it? To them, the bricks of our Great Wall which symbolizes our nation are nothing but building material. All they think of is how to make use of them. Politically speaking, this demolition of the Wall is an unforgivable crime, yet they consider it perfectly justified, a "revolutionary action"!

Our government had decided that the Great Wall should be preserved as one of our important cultural relics. But in those years between 1966 and 1976, how many important leaders that should have been protected by the state died? Wasn't Liu Shaoqi, chairman of our state, pulled down from his position, struggled against and killed? So what's that about pulling down the Great

Wall?

Our people look ahead, that's why there's hope for China. But we're also prone to forgetting the past and ignoring everything except our immediate concerns. We believe in getting things done and have no sense of past debt. That's why I am all for repairing the Great Wall and inscribing the contributors' names. I'm sure generations to come will say, "Some of our ancestors in the twentieth century destroyed the Great Wall, but others restored it. The names of the vandals have long since been forgotten; now we remember those who repaired the Wall." By then this tablet with names inscribed on it may be a cultural relic too, and they won't break it.

Oh, you mustn't think I'm doing this out of self-interest, spending five hundred yuan to buy myself a lasting frame. This money was left by my husband when he died. I discussed this with our daughter last night and we decided to give it to the Great Wall and to have his name inscribed there.

No, I don't know if he'd have done this if he were alive. Of course, if I could tell you, "This is what he would have done," that would be splendid; but I'm not sure that he would have. Not because he didn't love his country and the Great Wall but because we had no money. This five hundred yuan was the only nest-egg he had. His prizes, payment for articles and special subsidies came to 523 yuan altogether, of which he never touched a cent. And being strictly logical he might have said, "Other people have wrecked the Wall, why should I spend my money?" He and I were at college together, then became colleagues, we both worked as teachers. And the proudest day in his life was when the People's Daily published one of his articles. He had cancer of the liver. When it was terminal and he came out of his coma, sweating with agony, he said, "I'd like to see that again." I knew he meant that article "Notes on Teaching the Prose Poem `The Sounds of Autumn'", because in his opinion that was his only article worth keeping. That copy of the People's Daily was the only proof that he had lived and done some honest work...So yesterday evening I fetched my daughter home -- she's a teacher too, all of us have been middle-school teachers. I told her, "Let's leave your father's name on the Great Wall..." This is the best we can do for his memory, for the Great Wall and for our country.

Me? I studied in college before Liberation. My ancestral home is in Baodi, but my father moved to Tianjin to work in a foreign firm. No, my grandfather was very poor, a night watchman in a cathedral; but because of that job he was able to educate my father to be a comprador. My parents were both catholics. So after I finished primary and middle school in Tianjin I entered Furen University in Beijing, a missionary college where I studied Chinese. I was a Catholic then too. Later on I left the Church, I'd lost faith in it. The first time I wavered in my faith was in the third year, when I joined in the demonstration to "oppose hunger, oppose the civil war" - the May 20th Incident. On June the second the KMT reactionaries raided our college to make arrests. An agent of theirs in the college told them who to arrest -- God Almighty! Your lamb turned into a wolf! What undermined my faith completely was taking part in land reform just before I graduated. The whole mainland had just been liberated, and our old principal Mr. Chen Yuan took us to the southwest, where my classmates Cheng Minru and Zhang Kun were killed by counter-revolutionaries. That finished my faith in God, he couldn't save people; we'd have to save ourselves by relying on the Communist Party. (She carefully wrote her classmates' names down in our notebook, saying, "Mind you get these names right; they shouldn't be forgotten" - authors' note).

After graduation I was assigned to a middle school to teach Chinese. I taught there for thirty three years, not retiring until last year. I retired at fifty seven, teaching two years after the normal retirement age.

Furen University no longer exists, it was amalgamated by other colleges. Its name meant Foster Goodness. Its first principal was an American. Mr. Chen Yuan, one of the directors, died in Beijing. Mr. Yin Qianli died in Taibei. They were all excellent scholars and good teachers. Our university put moral character first, health second and learning third. We believed that fostering goodness meant refraining from self-indulgence. I don't know if Furen University in Taiwan still abides by this principle. Well, I mustn't go on too long about Furen...

As a middle school teacher, my starting pay was 52 yuan -- before that for a time we received wages in kind. Then my pay went up to 62 yuan and finally 78. After that we had no pay rises. 78 yuan was the most a middle school teacher earned. My husband and I were the same, first classmates and then colleagues with equal pay for equal work. We had old people to support -- his parents, mine had money -- and children to bring up too. So we were on a tight budget. After the Cultural Revolution, with the children off our hands, our life improved. But we never had money to spare. We saved up to buy a TV set; then saved up to buy a washing machine. We'd started saving again when my husband fell ill...not until he was dying did I know that he'd kept this nest-egg of 523 yuan.

Ah, there are some things you may not understand owing to your different experience and age. This is like teaching, you can't go on day after day teaching the classics, you have to teach practical writing too. So, originally I was a Catholic, a theist; later I believed in communism, but still as a theist, not believing in the cause of communism but deifying our leader. The Cultural Revolution shook me. I went back to being a Catholic; not openly of course, but to find something I could trust in. After the Gang of Four was smashed, I started believing again in the Party and the people, this time as an atheist. People like us no longer put our trust in certain individuals, we put the country's interests first and trust the Communist Party. I know the Party has made mistakes; it's not infallible. But only the Communist Party can save China.. I think it's the heart of China...

My contribution to repair the Great Wall is the biggest I've ever made. A few years ago we had an alumnae reunion. My husband and I gave ten yuan, not really knowing what for. I gave one yuan for the disabled, one yuan for the Children's Fund, ten cents for the preservation of pandas. I didn't want to give any money for pandas, but some children pestered me for it, so I gave them ten cents. I'm not an animal lover, though I know pandas are a "national treasure" linked with ecology, but I don't like them. I may have been brought up a Christian, but I take the world as it is, and if some animals can't survive, the sooner they die out the better. No, I dislike all sorts of birds as well.

I haven't any more money. If I had, I'd donate it for the Great Wall too -- you know, we're still not exactly sure how long the Wall is. That's right, our funds are still limited, there are many problems we can't tackle yet. I wonder if some of your readers would contribute money to do such a survey of the Great Wall? I don't know how much it would cost; besides, this isn't for me to even suggest or even think of...Sorry for this digression. Goodbye.

HANDOUT 6

ZHANG BAOJIAN

(Under the plans of the new economic reforms, in the future all of China's grain, vegetables, cotton and sugar will be produced by a small percentage of China's farmers through contracts and cooperatives, freeing the remaining seventy percent of rural residents from working the land. In other words, some six hundred million Chinese peasants will eventually no longer engage in traditional farming. This is a major force to reckon with.

Though many of the urbanized peasants now engaging in peddling and other small businesses in Beijing are further removed from the soil than their counterparts in other cities, few of them regard themselves as urban residents.

Zhang Baojian is twenty-nine years old. At the time of this interview, he was wearing a woolen suit and had a white measuring tape hanging around his neck. The following was recorded at the Donghuamen Gate peddlers' market near Wangfujing Street in downtown Beijing.)

"You guessed it, I'm not from Beijing. And don't believe the "Shanghai Tailor" sign I've got hanging up there. I'm not from Shanghai either. My hometown's Qingpu. That's a county right outside the Shanghai municipal area. It's late now and business is pretty slow, otherwise I wouldn't be talking to you this way. Usually I'm much too busy. If I didn't have this sign up, no one would give me any business. But I'm not trying to fool anybody; Qingpu's actually run by the Shanghai government.

I come from a family of farmers. We don't get grain coupons like you people in the city, so we have to grow our own food. I finished junior middle school, but it was only a rural school for us country folk. When I graduated, there weren't any college entrance examinations to take. But even if they'd had them then, hayseeds from the country like me wouldn't have had a chance of passing. Both my parents are still alive. They're illiterate farmers. Qingpu's a pretty poor part of the world, you know. A few years ago, there wasn't a single light bulb in the whole place. But because it's so close to Shanghai, nobody believes me when I tell them that. Things have gotten a lot better the last few years. A lot of people have TV sets now. My family? Sure, we have one, we've got a real fancy color TV. Both my younger sister and I learned a trade; that's a surefire way to make money. Now we've got plenty of money, but no education. I'm living here in Beijing now, but I hardly ever write letters back home. Writing letters is too much trouble.

The year I graduated was the same year that old baldy Lin Biao got himself cracked up in a runaway airplane. After graduation, all my classmates went back to work on their family farms. Middle school kids in the countryside had no other choice. At that time they were using the workpoint system like up at Dazhai. Young people like us worked our tails off from morning till night for a paltry seven workpoints; ten was the most anybody got in one day. They didn't figure out how much each point was worth till the end of the year, so none of us knew how much money we were making. The most they ever paid was 29 per day, but that was for ten points. If you want, you can figure out how much I earned. What a grind! The worst it ever got was the year they raised all that commotion about eradicating the "four pests" (rats, sparrows, flies and mosquitoes - authors' note). That year we had to pay the production team one point something points each day out of our own pockets. It was bad enough slaving out in the fields for close to nothing. But we had to sign IOU's for grain (actually borrowing grain from the production team or brigade before the harvest - authors' note). There was a saying going around at that time, "If the Tangshan earthquake had hit Qingpu, it would have been a heck of a good deal." There's nothing funny about that. When there's an earthquake, at least you're sure of getting some emergency grain rations.

With an empty wallet, what's the use of going into the city? You can't buy anything there. All you can do is walk around window shopping. In those days everybody was jealous as hell of people from Shanghai. We all felt like failures, and people started saying fate had it in for us. But things are better now. What's so great about Shanghai anyway? The people there hardly have any money. They don't have color TV or decent places to live either. But they keep on making fun of us, like we're their stupid country cousins or something. But you know what? My wallet's bulging and their salaries are so low it'd make you cry. In fact, in one day I can make as much as they get paid for two weeks' work.

I started studying tailoring the year they began the production responsibility system. At first they called it the "field responsibility system," but the two are actually the same thing. Our family, a total of seven people, had a little over two mu of land to work (a mu is equal to one sixth of an acre). It wasn't enough. There were too many people and not enough land. Since they divided all the land in the brigade up evenly among the households without counting how many mouths you had to feed, the more able-bodied workers in your family the less you got to eat. I wasn't stupid. I knew the new policy was to let everyone make money and get rich, but with so little land you could only earn squat. So I went out and learned how to be a tailor. My older brother stayed home and worked the fields.

The production contract system meant dividing the land up among individual families. At the beginning these plots were called "responsibility fields," but actually assigning production quotas and dividing up the land is the same thing. The idea is, the fewer people on the land, the more money you can make.

Some people were really poor at farming and couldn't make any money doing it, so they rented their fields out to others on the sly, freeing themselves to do other work. This was legalized two years ago, and now people can take on more land if they've got the manpower to work it. In addition to turning in your state

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grain rice quota, you've got to pay a sort of land use tax to the brigade based on the amount of land you farm. Don't forget, they still own the land. Anyway, when everyone else was sweating away out there like a bunch of idiots, I went out and started learning a real skill.

Learning to be a tailor is no simple matter. The first thing you've got to do is pay someone to teach you the ropes, since nobody's going to give away their family trade secrets for nothing. I made up my mind not to improve the lot of any tailors in Qingpu in this way. I wanted to learn in Shanghai. In the last few years, everyone and their uncle in Shanghai's been opening up tailoring schools. The neighborhood committees have them, the districts have them, the educated youth organizations have them and they're even privately run ones now. But I decided to keep away from those private ones. The good things about the places run by the city government is that if you're one of those unemployed educated youths you can study for free, or at least pay half tuition. Naturally I wanted to study for free...

(He continues by recounting how he lied to get into the school, studied for a year under another name and finally graduated, receiving a falsified diploma. After that he worked without a small business license for several months and earned over five thousand yuan. He then bought a license for one thousand yuan, and moved to Beijing.)

Sure there're a lot of people out there getting rich in slippery ways. I've never been in an airplane, or on a sleeper train for that matter. I always buy the cheapest hard-seat tickets. It's not worth throwing away a few days income on a single night's sleep. Even if I were rolling in money I'd never travel that way. There're too many better ways to spend your money. I'm still single and I don't have any girlfriends. That doesn't bother me though. If you've got money, a skill and enough energy to keep yourself going, it's no trouble to find a decent wife.

I'm all in favor of the government's new policies. If Deng Xiaoping wanted a suit made, I'd do it for him for free. But he'd have to promise me that they won't fool around with these policies. I'm just kidding of course. What does a big shot like Deng Xiaoping need me for? Hey, don't record that, alright! Rewind the tape. I know how to work a tape recorder like that, I've got one at home. It's better and a hell of a lot bigger than the one you're using. It's made in Japan.

I bought government bonds for a thousand yuan. You see, the government is starting to borrow cash from the people now. I'm willing to do that since there's a pretty good chance they're going to pay me back. In Shanghai, whole work units buy bonds and split the cost evenly among the workers. That's a pretty piss-poor way to do it.

This is the first time I ever heard the term "urbanized peasant." There's a lot of urbanized peasants out there who are richer than I am. They make good money cultivating mushrooms and raising chickens. They can earn a lot more than I do without ever having to leave home. Some of those families can earn ten thousand yuan a year. But there are also quite a number of people worse off than I am. Since they're totally unskilled, there's nothing anybody can do to help them. There're also people who get rich one day and lose it all the next. They buy clothing in Guangzhou or Shanghai, or even in Shenzhen, and sell it up in the northeast. Some do real well at it. But others lose their shirts at it. It's a pretty chancy business. Better to make your money with your own hands, I say. When someone else gets rich, I don't ever turn green with envy about it. No way ! I don't think that anyone who goes into business can beat the state at it. Can you beat their set-up? Can you beat their prices? I really believe what Chairman Mao said: "Ample food and clothing through self-reliance." You call peddling clothing in the northeast self-reliance? Don't laugh. This is what I believe and nobody's going to make me change my mind. Commodity circulation? That's just buying and selling. You can't really call that work.

You know, if you write about me in the newspapers, everybody in Qingpu's going to make fun of me. They'll say: "He's no ten-thousand-a-year household, what's his name doing in the paper?" Actually, my family earned more than ten thousand yuan last year. But since on the books I don't live with them anymore, they didn't count my income in. Families that earn ten thousand yuan a year get a prize of a coupon to buy a Phoenix bike (Phoenix bikes are the most sought-after brand in China and hence are in short supple. The coupon gives the holder the privilege of buying one - authors' note). Doesn't bother me. You can buy one of those on the black market now pretty easily for about forty yuan over the regular price. Who's going to ride it? Everyone who I know who rides a bike has a Phoenix already.

No, I don't have any plans worked out for the future. I can hardly write in the first place, so what good is a plan going to do me? I wasted nine years in school already. But I can get by using the northern dialect now. I've learned to use "nin", the polite form of "you", as everybody else does in Beijing.

I plan to keep moving around like this for another couple of years and then open a little shop of my own somewhere and settle down. Maybe I'll earn a little bit less that way, but who cares? I'll have a wife and child to take care of by then. Everything'll be alright so long as I can keep my capital. It's going to take me another couple of years to put enough in the bank. I need twenty thousand at least. With any less than that, the interest isn't enough to support a family.

HANDOUT 7

LUO BIN

(Jinling Hotel, Nanjing's first-class hotel, has just been completed and is still practically empty. It is ten in the evening and the attendant is sleepy. "If you want to chat, try the Victory; its coffee bar is open to the public." A smile lights up her tired face. "Go on, you'll find honest-to-goodness Nanjingers there!"

The Victory Hotel coffee bar sells beer too. People are dancing between the tables. The admission charge is one yuan. Luo Bin, male, nineteen, is holding a glass of beer and smoking a good brand of cigarette.)

"You're not a Nanjinger? That's why you don't understand. The coffee bar in the Jinling Hotel is top-notch, it even revolves, but they won't let us in there! In the whole of Nanjing, darn it, this is the only place where we can kill time. The Friendship Store is just not friendly to us, Chinese aren't allowed inside! The Jinling Hotel is the same, it's maddening. Should be smashed!

I know all that, we're still short of funds, need foreign currency, must safeguard foreign visitors -- you don't have to tell me. You and I have different standards, we're not birds of a feather. If you've any guts, record what I say and print it! Let people judge for themselves. In China, in Nanjing, why can't Chinese go to places where foreigners go? The Dingshan Hotel, the Shuangmenlou, and the Jinling you spoke of just now all keep us out; even the bloody curio shop serves only foreigners. We can't go into the shop for overseas Chinese, and those who can can't go into the Friendship Store; yet foreigners who go there can get into any hotel! It doesn't make any sense. My dad's a Party member. I ask him, "Is this in line with the Marxism-Leninism you believe in?" He acts dumb.

Yes, quite right, some places are out of bounds to foreigners, but I'm not allowed in those restricted zones either. Foreigners coming down the Yangtze aren't allowed to photograph Nanjing Bridge, but neither am I. Besides, I've no camera.

I'm waiting for a job. I don't mean what you would by that. I don't count keeping a stall, with a trading license, as waiting for a job -- those people have something to do. I don't do a thing, sponge off my family. Some time ago a foreigner, a woman, came here and asked me, "Waiting for a job, does that mean unemployed?" Ha, she spoke damn fluent Chinese, with no farting foreign accent. I knew she was having me on -- she understood. I told her, "Unemployed means you've lost a job; waiting for a job means waiting for work. They're not the same. " That floored her. She said, "You're good at repartee." I retorted, "You're good at firing off questions!" I couldn't be bothered with her; I was thinking, "You're not my wife, to waste my time talking rubbish." But I kept a smile on my face to look friendly. Hell, I know some foreigners come here to make friends, some come as spies to pick up secret intelligence. Most of them come for fun, and when they've had enough fun they ask all sorts of questions. Then they go home to publish articles to recoup the cost of their plane fares. That way the trip costs them nothing and they make a name, right? That's how it is. But whatever seems right to me you say is wrong. We can't see eye to eye. You're a writer, can make money. Don't say what you think. We don't see eye to eye. No, anyone who can scribble a few damn lines is a writer, a cut above us. But I despise the lot of them because they're out to fool the people. As I see it, Liu Binyan is about the only honest writer there is. Don't get heated up, I'm not getting at you. Didn't you tell me to suit myself what I said? What? What's so special about "suit yourself" -- that's a phrase I picked up watching TV ads. So it slips out, dammit, from habit.

Swearing's a habit I have. Everyone likes cussing.

Depends how you look at it. In our country the worst off are the youngsters waiting for jobs. Me? Hell, I'm one of the worst of the lot, I've reached a dead end. Some of the better ones study and learn skills to serve society, but not me! In this life it doesn't pay to be too good, or even fairly good. You only lose out. You mustn't break the law either, it's not worth it, squatting in prison is no fun at all. So I've bloody well chosen to drift. Haha, you're right. I'm a backward element among the youth waiting for employment.

I'd like to work. I honestly don't want to go on drifting. But no one wants me. If anywhere wanted me I wouldn't be at a loose end like this. But, dammit, they all want college graduates, who wants someone like me? I've not even got a high school certificate, failed six out of seven exams. Passed in sports, but that's not worth a fart! How can I enjoy life? At a loose end with nothing to do, I've nowhere even to let off steam, that's why I come here. To dance, to blither and drink with people I know or with strangers. It's become a habit I can't break, I have to come even if it means borrowing money. You think, my dad gives me just ten yuan a month, not even enough for butts, let alone to come here. Don't worry, I don't steal it, I'm no thief. I know how to buy cheap and sell dear -- savvy? It's not smuggling. Take jeans for instance, locally made but passed off as foreign goods, four yuan a pair in Guangzhou, my mates and I bring back several dozen pairs and can hock each for ten yuan. If people want to be suckers that's their look-out! Speculating? In a way. I do it on the sly, don't let my dad know. He's a Party member, works like an ox for the people. I'd like to be an ox, but where the hell is the cart? Or the land? Huh, I'm a wild bull.

Me? Of course I believe in communism. The mess I'm in is one thing, but there's nothing wrong with communism. And I'm all for Old Deng. If not for him, hell, we'd long ago have had to go down to the countryside. With these reforms the old peasants have divided up all the land, so there's no more "going to the countryside". I may look down and out, but I'll be damned if I'd go and live in a village! Besides, these last few years our country's really picked up and restrictions have been lifted, all thanks to Deng the Great and the Third Plenary Session of the Party.

My name's Luo. I was born in 1964. I'll be twenty this year, next month is my birthday. At school I was run-of-the-mill, nothing special. I've been waiting for a job since September `82, nearly two years now, damn futile. The residents' committee sent me last year as a casual laborer to boil water. I quit after two months -- it was futile; I made little more than fifty yuan a month. Besides, you don't understand, there was no chance in that job of becoming a regular worker. And everybody looked down on me for doing it, so it's better to wait for a job. I've asked people to find me work, no use, I've no pull and no money. My dad's a grade-20 cadre, not even a section chief, who's going to help me? Hell, I've had a rotten deal, born into such a bad family -- when factory workers retire their sons or daughters can step into their shoes, but that doesn't go for cadres. With my dad a piddling cadre I'm at a dead end.

Self-reliance, yes. But how many people get anywhere on their own? Everyone depends on connections. There you go again, you disagree. We look at things differently.

> It's pull counts most, then money;
> Doctors and drivers get whatever they please;
> Train attendants and shop assistants have their perks,
> And it's useful to have parents overseas.

Have you never heard that? Such people get along all right. They're top-drawer, dammit. Me, I'm bottom of the barrel! Worse off than a girl at the bottom, because she may take someone's fancy and marry a top-drawer fellow, shooting up overnight. Me? I haven't a hope.

Look for a girl? She'd have to be blind to take me. I've figured it out. If I can find work next year, after three years as an apprentice, by the end of `87 or the start of `88 I'll be earning 38 yuan a month. No one is going to marry me before that.

What makes me think I can find work next year? Because the state's finding jobs for us all in batches. Next year's bound to be my turn. But I've no graduation certificate, after three years' study I flunked the final exams; so maybe no one will take me (A girl invites him to dance -- authors' note) Go and find someone else. Can't you see we're talking business? (She looks at him and swears, then moves away -- authors' note) You don't know, she's a tramp! Expelled from her school. That's how it is in Nanjing, it's always the girls who ask the men to dance, damn peculiar. Me? I'm not afraid of her! I'm a buddy of her brute of a man. I've learned bad ways here, that's why I don't let my kid sister come to pick up bad ways too.

OK, I've no hope, I just hope the country will grow rich, then I can live a bit better. The one thing I'm proud of is --

I´m Chinese. I´ve a right to vote, I´m a citizen. So it disgusts me when Chinese suck up to foreigners! Look at places like the Friendship Store, they´re the limit! If I were a big shot, first thing I´d do, I´d kick out the men guarding the gate of the Friendship Store and Jinling Hotel, then I´d close down this coffee bar -- few decent people come here. I count as one of the best! But I´ll never be a farting official, can´t even get myself taken on as an apprentice.

Yes, as a kid I had damn crazy ideas, longed to be a tankman. Idiotic. Now I´d still like to fight, fight in the next world war, off to the battlefield to risk my neck defending home and country. I know, I know, everyone wants peace, why should I want a war? I´m fed up, bored to death. Besides, my life´s worth nothing. If worthwhile types like scientists and engineers die, they´re a big loss to the country; my death would be a good thing. As it is, I´ve not done anything worth a dog´s fart.

I often think I´m a fly in a glass bottle, with light but without any future, and I can´t take out the cork to let myself out. Dammit, I often doubt, with the bad habits I´ve picked up in these last two years, whether I could do an honest job of work in a factory. It´s a good thing there aren´t many people like me, or the country´d be in a bad way.

HANDOUT 8

YANG SHOUQIAN

(Yang Shouqian, nineteen, has a beard about six inches long and shoulder-length hair. His small straw hat has a red tassel on it. People wait outside his hotel to catch a glimpse of him.)

For a year and a half, on foot and on bike, I've travelled over 35,000 li. I've just had my nineteenth birthday.

I wanted to see the country, so I set out.

I'm from Jiamusi. In primary school and up to the first term of my third year in junior middle school I was a good student, always got top marks. But by then I'd had enough of stodgy schoolbooks, so I stopped going to school in the second half of my third year. I studied at home instead. What if I'd finished school? I'd have gone on to high school, taken college entrance examinations; but thousands of candidates sit for that exam; after graduation I might have been chosen for some job I didn't like, work that didn't interest me, which would get me nowhere. So I thought that rather than be molded into a screw, I'd better mould myself and find a screw-cap to fit me. My classmates and teachers thought there was something wrong with me, that I was out of my mind. They came to our place to talk me round, steer me back on to the "right track" -- get me to crack the standard textbooks. But I stuck to my guns.

This social pressure was mostly family pressure, since families make up society. By the time we have an ideal society, the family will have to be broken up! My dad -- it was mostly him -- was a good father, a good feudal father who liked beating us. He beat me when I was a kid, I grew up under the whip of that feudal despot. It was hard to argue with him, he always kept that whip at the ready to give us a beating. He practiced Chinese medicine and was polite to his patients, but he hadn't a good word for anyone else.

They insisted on me getting a junior-middle-school certificate. My father said, "D'you expect me to have to keep you all these years in school for nothing?" I must have a certificate to show for it. So I went back to take the exam.

When I had the certificate I needed work. Had to wait for a job, right? But what I really needed was to understand society, so as to have some kind of perspective. I worked for three days in a construction brigade, then "retired" to make friends with the local people: workers, peasants, hooligans, drop-outs, all sorts. I wanted to find out, see how these friends of mine lived and what they felt about life. I spent one whole winter on that. Then I made up my mind to leave Jiamusi in spring and travel all around the country.

On March 21, 1983, my father bawled me out again. "For days, you've been going on about touring different provinces, but there's no sign of you taking off yet." In fact I'd already made my preparations. "Don't worry, I'm off tomorrow," I told him. "Go on then!" he said. "Good riddance to bad rubbish!" So with this blessing I left.

At 4:30 a.m. the next day I set out on foot on my fact-finding journey. I felt pretty bad as my friends saw me off. "You can't see me off all the way," I told them. "We'll meet again some day." Though it was early spring, the northeast was still covered in snow and ice. Looking back I saw an expanse of white with the smokestacks of Jiamusi sticking up like grey pillars. I headed alongside the road towards Harbin...

I had twenty yuan which my granddad had given me for the Spring Festival. He called it money to "weigh down the year", to try to stop us youngsters from growing up. Because if you grow up to manhood, then grow old, you'll die; so better not to grow up at all. That's a folk custom. If you think about it, it may help you to understand some of our peoples' failings. My parents? Certainly they gave me no money. They cursed me and refused to let me go! They even cursed the secretary of the municipal Youth League Committee. No, I didn't ask him to our place to be cursed. Before leaving I needed a letter of introduction, didn't I? Without one, I'd have trouble every step of the way, so I asked the Youth League Committee for a letter. I lied to them, said I was waiting for a job, was twenty-five and wanted to see the country at my own expense. Since this sounded plausible, they wrote the letter...

"Comrade Yang Shouqian is on a fact-finding tour; please put him up" -- that short introduction smoothed my path for me, though it wouldn't make it plain sailing all along the way. After leaving Heilongjiang, I tramped through Jilin, Liaoning, Hebei and Tianjin to Beijing, 5800 li in all, pacing out the globe, wearing out three pairs of shoes. The letter of introduction saved me a lot of money, since local governments, Youth League offices and other units gave me board and lodging. Most of them were eager to help me and expressed admiration, skepticism, surprise or even pity. Some of them cold-shouldered me, thinking it was ridiculous, as if I would repent if they didn't give me a bed. Sometimes I stayed with villagers, sleeping with kind old peasants and their equally friendly dogs and fleas; sometimes I slept out in the open in a sleeping-bag I had made, and if it got too cold I would run around to warm up. I didn't mind, it was all my own doing.

I wasn't out to break any marathon record, my aim was to understand society and investigate folk customs; so after reaching Beijing I bought a bike and a simple camera. The money? I earned it! While finding out about local customs and listening to the villagers' tales and gossip about their neighbors, I practiced medicine. With the prescriptions passed down in our family I cured quite a few patients, all with fairly common diseases. The countryside's still short of doctors and medicine, as the "barefoot doctors", who had a little education, had gone off to be entrepreneurs. So I took their places as an itinerant quack.

By the time I left Beijing, I'd picked up a couple more ways of earning cash by teaching martial arts or coaching youngsters in philosophy and history for their high-school entrance exams. All this brought in a bit of money. But I never had any to spare. Right now I haven't a cent to my name. The other day I figured out that in eighteen months I spent altogether 1800 yuan. People don't believe this, because it costs that much to live in town, and I'd bought a bike, too, and a camera and several hundred yuan worth of books. But I honestly spent only 1800 yuan. And I earned it all myself apart from twenty-five ill-gotten yuan, the twenty given me at the Spring Festival and five more you'll hear about presently -- they were really ill-gotten gains. I didn't mind being broke, I could always earn more.

Sometimes I get taken for a "healer with magic powers," sometimes for a schizophrenic. In one temple the nuns kowtowed to me as a "reincarnation of Buddha." But very few people believed that I was investigating local customs. (He picked up a mug and took a sip, then tapped the mug -author). Take this mug for instance. Someone called it a golden rice bowl, someone else a piss-pot; it's obviously a mug but no one admits it. And me? I call myself a "high-class beggar" or "semi-itinerant quack." Aren't begging and cheating social phenomena too?

My three days in Shanghai were the most frustrating. I'd collected a whole mass of material and written a long account of my observations, as well as an article on marriage. I showed it to an old scholar who studied folklore. "This article of yours," he said, "well, it...It smacks of spiritual pollution." Why? Because I mentioned communal marriage and promiscuity. "These things, well, the masses have forgotten them. So why bring them up?"

That wasn't the first time I met with this kind of reaction. I feel we've got to analyze our Chinese folk customs and the inner logic of the development of folk literature. Stands to reason, doesn't it? But when I speak of a cultural transition zone between relatively backward and relatively advanced cultures, the usual reaction is, "What's a `cultural transition zone'? Did you make up that expression?" Language is a tool to express ideas so that men can communicate, so why shouldn't I coin a phrase? But no! "You haven't got the right!" Because I'm too young. They claim that old terms can express new ideas quite clearly. I must look up the first paper on atom bombs to see if it left out "atom" and just said a "super bomb". I'm not joking. You may think it funny but I don't.

Touring the northeast and the north I was left alone, basically, by the police and militia. But I ran into bandits. That was when the whole country was searching for two gangsters, and quite a few bad characters in the cities had taken to the hills. I ran into some of them. Once two young fellows held me up. I told them, "I haven't got any money. I'm on a fact-finding tour." They told me to strip, and we started arguing. After arguing with me for a while, one of them dodged behind me. I stepped aside just as he lammed out with his stick. Wham! Luckily for me he missed me, but he bashed the face of the guy in front of me. I kicked him and jeered, "Fine stick-up men you are! You should take a few lessons from an old hand like me." With that I took off. Believe me, that was a narrow escape. If that blow had landed on me I wouldn't be here today.

Another time I bumped into a "good bandit". When he grabbed me I told him, "I haven't a cent, haven't eaten for a whole day. I'm on a social study tour." He didn't believe me of course. Demanded to see my papers. Who ever heard of such a thing, a bandit wanting to see your letter of introduction! When I showed it to him he said, "Good for you, brother! I haven't made any hauls the last few days, all I've got is five yuan, but take that!" I didn't want his stolen money. "I'm helping you out," he fumed. "If you insult me I'll kill you!" I looked at his club and was afraid he'd really beat me to death, so I took the money and ran. Behind me I heard him saying to himself, "Not take money? Who on earth refuses money?" That five yuan was a headache to me. If I left it by the road somebody else might pick it up and spend it. How could I hand it in? I had to keep it and try to put this ill-gotten gain to good use. That was the five yuan I spoke about earlier. I often think about that guy and hope he's straightened himself out.

By now I've written over three million words, I keep a diary every day. I've also taken nearly four thousand photographs. Different Youth League committees and cultural bureaus have helped me develop them. Seems to me that from the thirties to the eighties, the study of folklore was at a low ebb in China. Practically nothing new came up. Folklorists abroad have taken a big step forward, and we've taken over some of their new ideas, jumping as it were from grade three to grade five. But it's no use just blindly copying foreign methods. The study of folklore isn't the same as building a computer. You've got to draw on different social sciences, on natural sciences too like math and statistics, to study our Chinese customs. No. I am against the study of folklore based on statistics. Foreign theories aren't always correct. We must keep our priorities straight. So I say that the study of folklore in China today is just in an embryonic stage, not fully systematized.

I've been asked about the political significance of what I'm doing. What the motive behind that question was, I don't care, but the man who asked it certainly didn't know anything about folklore. I'm studying these social phenomena, trying to understand the emergence and development of different cultural groups, with the aim of reforming some of our national defects. If you don't understand them, how can you reform them? For instance, why are peasants everywhere afraid of family planning? Why do women go into hiding to have their second baby? Better first get some idea of the influence of material life on people's thinking, on their views of existence, clan relationships, their sense of family responsibility and so forth...

I plan next to study the aboriginal wild men. In the history of civilization, or in the history of mankind you might say, could there have been a group that turned away from modern civilization? Is there a community that has stopped evolving, a community still in a pre-historic stage? These things are mysteries. I want to discover some wild men - the missing link in human evolution - and find out how they developed. Out of the world's four big mysteries, two, the Loch Ness Monster and the Bermuda Triangle are abroad, out of my reach; I haven't the equipment or technical know-how to study UFOs: I can only study wild men. That's why I've kept my hair long and grown a beard, and got my mother to make me a fur coat.

In December I'm going to Guangxi, next spring to Hubei, to Shennongjia. I know plenty of people have searched Shennongjia already without catching a single wild man. If I find any, I may not catch them, I'd rather live with them. That's the only way to get to know them and to study them. I have to be among them, not with them in a cage and me outside. Genuine zoologists don't study tigers in zoos. So when people ask me, "Young Yang, when are you going to catch a wild man?" I just laugh. At most I may bring one back with me.

I shan't leave the mountains until I've succeeded. A few days ago when I was in Beijing I climbed the Great Wall, a sort of farewell gesture. Standing on the Great Wall I found myself really moved, quite carried away. The Great Wall is our national symbol, but it's no longer able to protect us. It's a wonderful part of our cultural heritage, but now it's falling to bits, ruined by people and by the elements, like a dragon hacked apart and left on the ground...

> Let us build our new Great Wall with our flesh and blood.
> The Chinese nation faces its greatest danger.
> From each one the urgent call for action comes forth...

That's from the national anthem.

I'm not up to that, don't know enough. What do I need? Photographic equipment and a small tape recorder, that would do me. I shall borrow the money and pay it back later. No, I don't collect contributions, don't know how to. But if some of your readers want to help me, they're welcome to.

"A FLY IN A BOTTLE," THAT'S ME

(Taken from Chinese Literature, Spring 1986, pp.21-25)

HER TRIBUTE

(Taken from Chinese Literature, Winter 1985, pp.9-14)

WHY? WHY DO I BUM AROUND?

(Taken from Chinese Literature, Winter 1985, pp.14-22)

AN URBANIZED PEASANT

(Taken from Chinese Literature, Spring 1986, pp.35-43)

LESSON 5
THE "TEN BAD YEARS" AND CHINA'S YOUTH

INTRODUCTION

Lessons 5 and 6 are designed to introduce American secondary students to examples of contemporary Chinese literature. More importantly, their purpose is to have students assess changing values in China as expressed through literature. In this lesson, the students will begin to understand the effects that the Cultural Revolution have had on the values of the Chinese people. Throughout this first story, we see the impact of those "ten bad years" (i.e. the Cultural Revolution, 1966-1976)on people of different generations.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will develop an awareness and understanding of recent Chinese literature.
2. Students will be able to evaluate contemporary Chinese values dealing with conflict and change.
3. Students will be able to compare the values expressed in Chinese literature with their own values and ideals.

TEACHING TIME: Two class periods

MATERIALS:

Melody in Dreams (Handout 9)

PROCEDURE

1. Divide the class into groups of two or three, make enough copies of "Melody in Dreams" for all groups. Read the story in class.

2. In the next class period, review the story briefly and ask groups to answer the discussion questions. Discuss the responses to the questions as a class.

HOMEWORK

1. Ask students to write a one-page conclusion to "Melody in Dreams".

HANDOUT 9

INTRODUCTION AND QUESTIONS FOR "MELODY IN DREAMS"

INTRODUCTION

No event has so deeply affected the lives of contemporary Chinese as the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976. The Cultural Revolution was a youth movement, partly spontaneous but largely directed by Mao Zedong, whose purpose was to recapture the spirit and ideals of the first Communist Revolution. Directed against "rightist" intellectuals and officials accused of becoming too conservative and self-serving, the movement quickly grew out of control. Eventually, millions of students and radical Red Guard youth humiliated, tortured and killed intellectuals and officials accused of having capitalist tendencies or Confucianist values. Under the direction of the "Gang of Four" led by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, millions of Chinese youth and their elders were sent to the countryside to engage in manual labor and "learn from the peasants."

In order to launder out the corrupting effects of foreign and Confucian values, Chinese were subjected to a harsh regimen of political indoctrination, confession sessions and denunciations of old values and cultures. Both the Beatles and Beethoven were banned in China during this era.

The 1980 short story "Melody in Dreams" explores the effects of the Cultural Revolution on the personal life of a Chinese teenager whose behavior, attitudes and values have been radically altered by that traumatic event. Generational conflict and search for meaningful personal relationships motivate the characters in this moving story. As you read "Melody in Dreams," think about and answer the following questions:

1. In what ways did the Cultural Revolution change Liang's personal and family life?

2. How would you describe Liang's behavior? Why does she behave or act the way she does?

3. Describe the points of conflict between Yuejun and Liang. What is the cause of their conflict?

4. What roles do Pei and Mao Tou play in this story?

5. Why is music and cello playing important in this story?

6. What choices and decisions do Yuejun and Liang have to face? In what ways are they similar to or different from those in your own life?

7. Are the conflicts in this story resolved? Why or Why not?

8. Given the events in this story, how should it end?

MELODY IN DREAMS
BY ZONG PU

[Taken from Prize-Winning Stories From China: 1978-79 (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1981)]

1

The cello music sounded through the air. It was deep and sad like the late autumn wind sweeping leaves off the ground or the grey clouds gathering in the cold, winter sky. Gradually the music became thinner and thinner as if it would become lost, never to be found. Suddenly, it burst into a loud, stirring sound which seemed to express only hope and desire.

"It is Murong Yuejun playing!" Many people were familiar with her music.

Murong Yuejun, a teacher of cello at a music college, was wedded to her instrument. She and her cello were as one, through it she expressed all her feelings. Today, however, she could not finish any piece. Putting the cello aside, she walked out onto the balcony and gazed into the distance.

It was September of 1975. Strands of her white hair gleamed in the setting sun. Her attractive face belied her more than fifty years of age. She gazed down the end of the street expectantly, but no one came. She was waiting for the daughter of her close friend Liang Feng, a man she had nearly married. He had since died, but she always remembered his daughter.

At the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War in 1937, Liang Feng and other youths had gone to the revolutionary base of Yan'an. Yuejun, however, at the time a music student at Yanjing University in Beijing, had been taken by her parents to the south. Then she had won a scholarship to study abroad and had not returned until after Liberation in 1949. After the death of her parents, she had immersed herself in teaching music.

Now it was growing dark. She went back into her room, deep in thought.

In the first years after liberation, Liang Feng had worked abroad. In the sixties he had been recalled to China to do cultural exchange work. Yuejun had heard him speak at some meetings. She was impressed by his way of expounding the Party's policies and moved by his devotion to the Party. She even met his wife, a respectable comrade and good mother.

Yuejun had also met their daughter, but the girl had not left a deep impression on her, except on one unforgettable occasion. It was during the Cultural Revolution, when all sorts of bad characters emerged to slander celebrated artists and intellectuals. Yuejun, because she had studied abroad, was attacked. At a meeting, she and some others were lined up on stage. Some famous musicians were pushed to the microphone to denounce themselves as reactionaries. Suddenly, three or four youngsters beat and kicked a middle-aged man onto the stage shouting: "Down with the revisionist monster Liang Feng!"

Stealing a glance at him, Yuejun was surprised to see her friend being forced to the microphone. Facing the crowd, he said: "I'm Liang Feng, a Chinese Communist!"

No sooner had he said this when some thugs leapt on to the platform and punched him. Blood poured from his mouth. Then a girl's clear voice was heard shouting: "Father! Father!"

There was an uproar as some protested against the beating, while others rushed to the girl and kicked her out of the hall. Though Yuejun's head was lowered, she saw the whole scene, except the girl's face. Whenever she thought of her, she felt a mixture of sadness and warmth.

Now she was going to see her for the first time since the incident.

There was a voice outside. Yuejun asked: "Is that you, Pei?" A plump woman of Yuejun's age entered. She was a Party member, and as early as the 1960's, became Party secretary of the cello section.

"I just popped in to see if Liang Feng's daughter was coming to see you today."

"She's supposed to, but she hasn't turned up yet."

"Do you remember ..?" Pei looked out the window.

"I haven't forgotten all those slanders." Yuejun's mild glance rested on her. After each criticism meeting, Pei had whispered in her ear: "Chin up! It's a test." Or: "Never mind. Don't let it upset you too much!" This had encouraged Yuejun enormously.

Pei had high blood pressure and was easily excited. Controlling herself, she said: "You must teach her well, Yuejun."

"Of course. I want to, but can I supplement the musical scores and materials?'

"I think one should, but who has the authority? The harmful members of society aren't only trying to destroy the normal ones, but our whole civilization and socialism." Pei's voice quivered.

"But what can we do?" Yuejun muttered.

"Wait until..." Pei slapped the arm of the chair. After a while she said she was going to see her paralyzed husband in the hospital. Smiling bitterly, she left.

It was night as Yuejun gazed out of the window at the maple tree illuminated by neighboring lights. Thinking of the girl, she supposed she would not come that night. Then there was a knock at the door.

Before she could answer it, a girl came in saying loudly: "Are you Aunt Yuejun? I had such trouble finding your home, I must have asked about a dozen people along the way. Your room's dark but I spotted your cello when I came in, so I guessed this must be the right place. I'm Liang Xia."

Switching on the lights, Yuejun saw that Liang Xia was a pretty girl, with her hair cut short. She was wearing a cream-colored jacket over a black woolen jersey, and deep grey trousers. With large eyes, slender eyebrows and rosy cheeks, she was smiling quizzically at Yuejun.

"So she's sizing me up too," thought Yuejun, who shook hands with her, saying: "I´ve been waiting for you..."

2

Liang Xia was ten years old in 1966 when the Cultural Revolution began, a marked turning point in her life. Until then she had been the pride of her parents, but her happiness dissipated with the start of the Cultural Revolution. Her father, a leader in his office, was dragged out one night by people who broke into their home. Then her mother was separated from her. Liang Xia, bewildered, was left alone at home, cooking meals to take to her parents. Her father liked eating noodles and flapjacks, while her mother liked sweet food. Sometimes, Liang Xia herself went hungry in order to give her parents their meals. She did this until one day a man told her not to prepare any more for her father, since he had died five days earlier.

After her parents were detained, some of their comrades invited Liang Xia to live with them, but certain people objected saying that she could only live with a relative. She had an aunt, her mother´s sister, but she had refused to take in Liang Xia, only allowing the girl to visit her and help her with various chores. At that time Liang Xia was in the fourth grade. Because of her parents, she too was criticized from time to time.

In those unhappy days, Liang Xia often dreamed that she was being weighed down by a heavy stone. Unable to remove it, she would cry herself awake. But in time she became accustomed to the sneers, and hid the hatred in her heart. After her mother was released, she accompanied her mother to a cadre school to do manual labor in the countryside. Then her mother was transferred to work in a small town in south China, where she met a cello teacher who had been dismissed from his school. So that Liang Xia would not idle away her time, her mother arranged for her to have cello lessons. Two months previously, her mother had died of illness. The death was particularly tragic because it was said that in short time there would be a meeting to clear her husband´s name. So Liang Xia came to Beijing and stayed with her aunt. She hoped that Yuejun could give her cello lessons. That was the reason for her visit.

"I´m sorry for being late, but I had to help my aunt with the washing up." She glanced around the room in which Yuejun had lived for many years. Against the window was a marble-topped mahogany desk left to Yuejun by her parents. At one corner stood a piano against which leaned a cello. In front of her bed was a folding screen painted with flowers and birds. Two armchairs flanked a stand and behind it was a lamp with an orange shade. The gentle light gave an atmosphere of tranquility.

"It´s nice and cozy here," Liang Xia said as she followed Yuejun to the kitchen, where she took the thermos flask and poured herself a cup of tea. Yuejun told her that several years ago, a couple intruded into their home. Separating the room with a screen and bookcases, they lived there for a few months before they moved out.

"We were driven out of our home and had to leave everything," Liang Xia said matter-of-factly. "When my parents were detained, I stayed in the attic. It seemed quite cozy at the time. But mother was ill after her release and whenever she climbed the stairs I had to carry her on my back."

Yuejun wondered how Liang Xia, with her delicate build, had managed that. Curious to know about her mother's illness, Yuejun nevertheless said nothing for fear of opening old wounds.

But as if she had read her thoughts, Liang Xia continued: "Mother had all sorts of complaints. I was like her doctor. I knew every medicine she took. In the end she died of pneumonia. I thought many times she would die, but she always survived. So I thought she'd recover that last time." Her tone seemed detached. Yuejun, however, was very sad.

"How many years have you been playing the cello?" Yuejun looked at her cello. "You love music, don't you?"

"No, I don't." Her reply surprised Yuejun, who stared fascinated at her thick lashes and dark eyes. "I have to learn something to get myself a job. I've been playing the cello since I was fourteen, but I'm not interested in it. I really preferred working in the countryside, but since my mother was too ill to join me, I went with her."

Yuejun was disappointed and wondered whom Liang Xia would follow now.

The girl added: "My parents were always talking about you, so I feel as if I've known you for ages. Mother said you could help me become a musician." A flicker of hope came into her eyes veiling the indifference which seemed to say: "But it doesn't matter if you refuse."

"Why bother learning to play the cello if you don't like it?"

"To make a living of course." Liang Xia said with a giggle.

If she had heard such a reply ten years ago, Yuejun would have been insulted. Now nothing astonished her.

"Play me something," she said after a pause.

When Liang Xia went to get the cello, she found a curtained-off alcove that stored Yuejun's junk. Lifting the curtain, Liang Xia exclaimed: "Goodness! Why do you store all your things here, auntie? One day I'll help you sort them out." Then holding the cello she began to play.

She played the second movement of a concerto by Saint-Saens. In spite of her poor technique, there was something in her playing that moved Yuejun. Although she failed to grasp the meaning of the music, she expressed her own feelings. She was making music.

"She has good musical sense," Yuejun thought.

She soon finished, but the room retained the atmosphere she had created. Putting the cello aside, Liang Xia searched Yuejun's face.

"To have a feeling for the music is most important," Yuejun said warmly. "But you don't handle your bow correctly yet. Look, it should be like this," and so saying she took the bow and gave the girl her first lesson.

3

After that, Liang Xia came once a week. When she was not studying, she would chat or help Yuejun with something. She was bright and seemed to know a lot, though sometimes she was ignorant of the most common things. For example, once a colleague was discussing some classical novels with Yuejun, when Liang Xia interrupted them saying she had read many of them. It seemed she had read whatever she could lay her hands on, but there were still large gaps in her education. She would often ask simple questions like when was the Opium War and what was it about. She may have seemed self-centered, confident of how to take care of herself, because since the death of her parents no one else had. Sometimes, however, she was also eager to help others.

One day Yuejun was learning to give injections. Liang Xia offered her arm because she said she was not afraid of pain. Then she added cooly: "Trouble is, you're afraid because you haven't been beaten up enough!" She seemed to have seen through everything and scorned the glowing revolutionary jargon in the newspapers. She would say: "All lies! Even Premier Zhou was slandered as a reactionary. Who's foolish enough to swallow that!" Her only belief was that Premier Zhou would triumph over those low-lifes. Yuejun hoped the same.

When she referred to Jiang Qing, she called her a "she-devil" who had created so many scandals and who still tried to fool the people. "She praises a novel about vengeance, while she really intends to attack us. One day I'll make my revenge out on her!" Her words puzzled Yuejun. She spoke freely, not caring what people thought. At times Yuejun was afraid one day she would get into trouble.

Pei, a frequent visitor, soon got to know Liang Xia well enough to drop her flippant tone and talk seriously.

One day Pei came to hear Liang Xia play. After listening to her she asked Yuejun, "If you want to supplement your teaching materials, why not use some western etudes? You're probably too timid."

Bow in hand, Liang Xia protested: "Of course she's timid, but what about you?"

"I never said I was bold," Pei smiled, "but we've each got a head on our shoulders, and we should use it to improve things."

"My head's too heavy for me. I don't like it. If you want, Aunt Pei, I'll give it to you. Then you'll be bold enough to start a revolution. Only don't get scared because you'll have to turn everything upside-down." She burst out laughing. "Revolution sounds fine but they murdered my father under that name also!"

"No, that was counter-revolution," Pei burst out. "Stop playing dumb and remember what your mother said to you. Remember those who hounded your father to death. You must think seriously about your future."

Liang Xia immediately became grave, bit her lip and stared at Pei. After a moment she lapsed into her usual flippancy and sneered: "I could care less about them! What about dinner? Let's go and make it. I'm very good in the kitchen..." She laughed.

That was always how she reacted.

Once when Yuejun asked about her future plans, she answered as briefly as before, adding with a raising of her eyebrows: "I'll fool around until my aunt throws me out, but that won't be immediately. She knows that my father's name may be cleared and that she stands to gain." Then she went to the alcove and lifting the curtain looked at it again.

Before long, her aunt threw her out. It was on an early winter day, when Liang Xia should have arrived for her lesson. At sunset she still had not come. Yuejun worried about what might have happened to her.

Suddenly Liang Xia burst in, a bulky satchel over her shoulder and a string bag in her hand. With a face flushed with rage, she cried: "Sorry to keep you waiting, but I've just had a hell of a row with my aunt." Then putting her bags in a corner, she sat down fanning herself with a handkerchief. Her eyes burned with resentment as she jeered and laughed: "It's just ridiculous!"

"Don't laugh like that," Yuejun said patting Liang Xia's shoulder. "Tell me what happened."

"My aunt said that my father's name can't be cleared because he was a reactionary and that he had killed himself to escape punishment. As for me, since I'm his daughter, there's no future for me. My staying with her has caused her a lot of trouble. Since her husband has just been promoted to deputy-minister and their block of flats is for ministers, ordinary people like me shouldn't be living there. We're a security risk. What nonsense."

Yuejun sympathized with her and wondered what she would do next.

"I'll stay with you if I may? Are you afraid?" she asked standing up.

Yuejun was silent. Of course she was afraid! To let Liang Xia stay with her would mean she too would be labelled as a counter-revolutionary. But how could she push her out? After all, she was Liang Feng's daughter.

Seeing Yuejun's hesitation, Liang Xia smiled with scorn. Then she noticed that she had reached a decision. Before Yuejun could say anything, Liang Xia walked over to the curtained alcove and put her things by it. "I've thought about it before. We can put a bed here." As she spoke she began pulling out the junk. "You sit over there, auntie." She sneezed. "So much dust! I always said I'd help you with spring-cleaning one day. Now my words have come true!" She laughed delightedly.

Amidst the dust, she hummed a tune as she worked. Having finished cleaning, she arranged the things in two piles of boxes and cases, on which she placed some planks for a bed. Then she made it up with sheets and a quilt lent to her by Yuejun. With a board from the kitchen she made herself a desk. Among the junk she had found a tattered scroll with a poem on it. It read:

Coming from your old home

You should know what is happening there;
Leaning against the window.
Did you see the plums in blossom?

Holding it in her hands, Liang Xia softly read it twice.

"Who wrote it?" she asked. "Both the poem and the calligraphy are good. Why don't you hang it up?"

"Wouldn't it be criticized?" Yuejun replied jokingly. "It was only this year that I put my screen here. Honestly, I'm afraid of courting trouble."

"Well I'm not." Examining it, Liang Xia noticed the inscription: "A poem by Wang Wei copied by Yuejun in G. city." The girl exclaimed: "So you wrote it! No wonder the calligraphy's so good." Immediately she hung it above her bed. Stepping back she gazed at it and then, clapping her hands, asked: "But where's G. city?"

"Geneva, in Switzerland." Yuejun looked at the old writing with some emotion. "I was there alone studying music and I felt very homesick. Once I listened to Dvorak's New World Symphony a dozen times non-stop. Whenever it reached the second movement I was deeply moved. So I wrote that poem on the scroll. What awful calligraphy!"

"There's patriotism in your words." Liang Xia gave a bitter smile. "Now even patriotism is getting criticized."

"I didn't have any clear ideas." Yuejun sat down at the table. "But I truly missed China then. My ancestors and I were born here. I was proud to be Chinese. That's why I appreciated that short poem. But if that is all wrong now, what's left?" Moodily she turned to the window: "Of course I learned Western music, but only so that I could better serve my country."

"Your country?" Liang Xia mocked. "Today that means individualism, egotism and counter-revolutionary revisionism!" Then she laughed: "Anyway you're all right as a musician. Isn't singing and acting coming into fashion?"

Yuejun did not want to comment on her sarcastic words.

At last Liang Xia had finished tidying up. "My bed's rather like a raft isn't it?" Going over to it, she said: "I'll stay on my raft. I'll be as quiet as a mouse in the day." Having climbed on her "raft" she suddenly popped her head out of the curtain and quipped: "Carefree on my raft, I don't mind whether the seasons come or go." Then she was quiet.

"Now there's no need to act like that," Yuejun laughed. Drawing back the curtain, she found that Liang Xia was lying back on her quilt, her eyes closed. On her rosy cheeks were streaks of dirt. "Get up and wash your face, Liang Xia. We'll have a lesson. Since you'll be staying here for a while, you mustn't waste your time."

On hearing her say "for a while", Liang Xia smiled faintly and glanced sadly at her.

At half past eight that evening they had a lesson. Liang Xia played first. Her technique was improving. As Yuejun was correcting her, there was a knock at the door.

A youngster in a green uniform without any insignia entered. The expression on his regular-featured face was troubled. Seeing Liang Xia sitting with the cello in her hands, he said to Yuejun: "Excuse me, are you Aunt Yuejun? I´d like to have a word with her." He smiled at Liang Xia.

Ignoring him, Liang Xia concentrated on her music, but after a while she explained: "This is Mao Tou. A friend of my cousin. Let´s continue our lesson."

"Mao Tou? Is that a nickname?" asked Yuejun casually, wondering about their relationship.

"Actually, I don´t know his real name." With this Liang Xia continued to play.

Snubbed, the young man turned to Yuejun for help. She suggested, looking at Liang Xia, that they go for a walk in the fresh air. Then she went to her desk and switched on the lamp. Pouting, Liang Xia walked out with her friend.

The next day at school, Yuejun told Pei about her decision. Pei was delighted. "I agree with you. She should live in your home." Some colleagues who sympathized with Liang Xia felt that in this way she could have an opportunity to study, as she´d become an orphan and a loafer. Those who objected said: "What if the police start making inquiries? And if Liang Xia does something illegal, Yuejun will be implicated." Yuejun was worried, but decided that if the authorities insisted the girl should leave, then she must let her go. Otherwise, Liang Xia could stay as long as she liked.

Time passed, and the two of them got along well together. Liang Xia was able, diligent and considerate. Always in high spirits, she reminded Yuejun of an elf from a dance by Grieg. But Liang Xia claimed to be a very down-to-earth sort of person. "If you were me," she argued, "you´d be just as practical."

Once, when the weather was already chilly, Yuejun bought Liang Xia some cloth for a jacket to be made at the tailor´s. But Liang Xia claimed she could make it herself, and went off to Pei´s home where there was a sewing machine. When she came back, she seemed very melancholy.

"What´s the matter?" Yuejun asked.

"Oh, nothing!" Liang Xia fidgeted with the remnants of the cloth. "Aunt Pei´s husband´s been paralyzed for three years, and she goes to the hospital every day to take care of him. Her high blood pressure doesn´t keep her from going to the office and studying the works of Marx and Lenin either. She told me that in the Yan´an days, people trudged in straw sandals, but each step seemed all the more significant. And one of her friends used to say that everyone at that time had a strong sense of responsibility. Life was so full of hope." After a moment her face brightened and she continued: "Aunt Pei said my father helped to reclaim the waste land and that my mother spun yarn. I´d like to live such a life, but now it seems that just playing my cello or breathing is illegal." Scissors in hand, she shredded the cloth.

Her usual apathetic and scornful expression returned, her tender heart seemed to have hardened. As Yuejun stroked her silky black hair, there was a knock at the door. Two young men with high sheepskin hats and fashionable trousers entered. Seeing them, Liang Xia sprung forward and told them to get out, banging the door shut. Yuejun did not know where Liang Xia picked up such friends. If she was home, Liang Xia would take them out, but as long as she was teaching or busy elsewhere, Yuejun was quite oblivious as to what went on in her home. As most of them were boys, she once tentatively warned Liang Xia against falling in love too early.

Hearing this, Liang Xia burst out laughing. "Don't worry! I won't be such a fool! I don't respect those boys. When I marry, my husband will be a high official!" She grinned mockingly, as if in her eyes high officials were toys for amusement. Then with forced seriousness, she added: "Or perhaps I'll be a spinster like you. By the way, why didn't you marry, auntie?"

"You tell me," Yuejun countered trying to avoid the question.

"It isn't that you believe in being single, but that you've never met a man you loved." She was sharp.

Since her arrival, Yuejun had been strict in making her practice various pieces every day. Though she did not assign any Western musical scores, Liang Xia often played some to amuse herself. One day when Yuejun returned, she overheard Liang Xia playing a plaintive melody by Massenet. It was so melancholy that she waited until Liang Xia had finished before entering.

Yuejun often wished that Liang Xia could attend a proper school, since she had real music talent. But it all depended on when her father's name would be cleared. If that happened, then the girl would be in a better position to study.

Meanwhile, Liang Xia led a seemingly carefree life. Apart from playing the cello and seeing friends, she often read some books on her "raft". One day Yuejun was shocked to find her reading a hand-written copy of an "underground" book. "Why are you reading that?" she asked.

"Why not?" Liang Xia retorted.

"The cover alone scares me."

"You wouldn't even say boo to a goose!" Liang Xia giggled. "When my parents were detained I was often beaten and criticized. Later I fought the boys back. They beat me and I punched them. I loved it!"

Not knowing what to say, Yuejun stared at her pretty, youthful face. Despite the merry, contemptuous expression, she sensed hidden apathy and misery.

"Since I'm older now, I've grown out of fighting. It bores me." Then she tried to reassure Yuejun: "Please don't worry auntie. Since I can't play the cello all day long, I have to read once in a while too. But I can't find any good books, so I read these, even though they're forbidden. It's like food. When there's nothing yummy to eat you eat anything. So there!" She glanced at the cabinet where she had some good books.

"You're wrong." Yuejun tried to argue with her.

"I know." Smiling, she added: "Now I just exist. If one day I can't go on like this, then I'll change my world outlook. That's how Mao Tou puts it."

"You can read what he's read, I think." Yuejun had found that Mao Tou was a thoughtful young man who had seriously studied some books on philosophy, literature and history. Although known as a "scholar" in his factory, he refused to join any writing teams run by the authorities. His father was an old cadre who had often shown concern for Liang Xia.

Yuejun's suggestion made Liang Xia smile again. After a moment, Yuejun opened the cabinet to let her choose whatever books she wanted. Happily Liang Xia looked through until she suddenly murmured: "My father had many books. However late he worked he never went to bed before reading a little. What a pity I was so young!...I..I hate..." Turning round she clutched hold of the cabinet, her eyes blazing. "Oh father! Father!" Her voice was as clear and pained as a few years before. "I don't believe that my father, a Communist full of enthusiasm, committed suicide. They killed him, but insist that he killed himself." She did not choose a book, but stood there gazing wistfully at Yuejun. "Do you think that the day I long for will come? Mother told me I must live to see it."

Yuejun could not bear to see her expression. Wanting Liang Xia to have a good cry, tears began pouring down her own face. Even if her father had killed himself, he would never have done so unless driven to it. He must have been in a terrible situation. She wanted to cry with Liang Xia, hoping that the girl's tears would wash away her cynicism. Instead Liang Xia rushed to her bed, leaving on the cabinet two nicks from her nails.

4

It was 1976 and the Spring Festival was approaching. Despite the festival, everyone was grieving. Where was the spring? People were profoundly anxious about their future since the death of Premier Zhou. There was a dreadful abyss in their hearts, which could not be filled by their tears and thoughts.

Before she went to the cadre school in January to do some manual labor, Yuejun entrusted Liang Xia to Pei's care. When she heard the sad news of the premier's death, she felt desolate. Worried that something might happen to Liang Xia, she wrote asking how she was. After she mailed the letter, Yuejun was afraid Liang Xia's reply would get her in trouble, so she quickly sent a message telling her not to answer. However, her reply did come. It said: "I'm prepared to shoulder my responsibility now." Though cryptic, it signified that a storm was imminent.

On her return home, Yuejun found Liang Xia had changed. In the past, Liang Xia's laughter made Yuejun sad. Now Liang Xia expressed her suffering in another way - by remaining silent. She thought more about her responsibilities. Sometimes Yuejun told her to play her cello to find peace in the music, but thinking about Premier Zhou disturbed her playing. In the past three weeks she had suddenly matured. Her flippancy was gone. In her dark eyes was a clouded expression, as if her thoughts seemed too heavy to convey. Some of her friends stopped coming; she was in no mood to play and that was all they were good for. When Yuejun asked her where her friends were, Liang Xia blinked as though she had never known them.

She got rid of the frivolous books, but she was not interested in serious literature either. To Yuejun's surprise, Liang Xia sometimes read works of Marx and Lenin. On the eve of the Spring Festival, Pei found her reading an article by Chairman Mao, a notebook by her side. Leafing through its pages, Pei was astonished to find a heading: "Crimes perpetrated by Jiang Qing." The charges listed were logical and cogent. Pei grasped Liang Xia's hand and said admiringly: "I always knew you were a smart girl, Xia."

Liang Xia smiled a genuine smile. "I thought a long time about your advice. I shouldn't fritter away my life and youth. Especially at this time."

Most of the notes had been made by Liang Xia and some by Mao Tou. As Yuejun read them, she felt they were telling the truth. But the truth meant trouble. She searched Pei's face wanting to know what to do.

Pei smiled at her. "It's correct to expose them for what they are. These notes are what we've been wanting to say ourselves."

Liang Xia told Yuejun: "I know that's the way you feel too. But you are too timid, auntie."

Yuejun sighed: "Who can we talk to?"

"We're only allowed to parrot the editorials," Pei added.

Liang Xia was silent. Her smile faded into contempt and pessimism.

Yuejun anxiously looked at the girl, while Pei warned: "It isn't just a question of daring to struggle. It's also knowing how and when to strike."

When they were having supper, Yuejun wanted to ask Liang Xia why she and Mao Tou had written the notes, but she did not press her.

After a long silence, Liang Xia said while eating: "On my way to the grain shop, I overheard two old women talking. One of them said `since our premier died, we have no heart to do New Year shopping.´" Then Liang Xia put down her bowl and walked away.

Suddenly there were three knocks at the door. Liang Xia immediately darted to open it and Mao Tou entered. Although he looked tense, he did not forget his manners, greeting Yuejun before turning to Liang Xia. "Let's go out," he suggested.

"What's the matter?"

"Please sit down," Yuejun urged. "It's so cold outside. Don't go out. Tell us what's happened."

Eyeing them both, he said: "My father's been arrested!"

"What?" Yuejun was dismayed.

"They can trump up anything," he replied, trying to control his anger. Then he continued: "A few days ago, my father told me they were concocting some charge against Premier Zhou. He said as long as he was alive he´d defend him and speak out. This morning your uncle told my father that they wanted him to attend a meeting. A neighbor reported that my father was tied up and driven away in a car. He wasn´t even allowed to leave a note for the family."

"I was luckier. I saw my father being dragged away," Liang Xia murmured.

"When I went to their office to see my father, the man on duty told me coldly that he was going to stand trial and couldn´t receive any visitors. They shoved me out the door."

Yuejun was outraged thinking how many families had been ruined by the Gang; how many young people had been deprived of their right to work and study or even live. They would not even let the premier alone. Our great hero had left nothing of himself after his death. Even his ashes had been scattered over the mountains and rivers. Now they intended to blacken his reputation.

Liang Xia trembled with rage. She suddenly laughed aloud. Yuejun took her hand which felt cold. "Xia!" she exclaimed.

"Those monsters are about to tear off their masks!" Brushing aside Yuejun, she put one hand on the table and the other to her breast.

"Yes, I think they are going to show their true intentions soon," said Mao Tou, looking cooly at Liang Xia. "We must continue collecting materials. The day´s coming when the Gang will be brought to trial and condemned."

Mao Tou paced the room and then said he was going to inform his friends about his father´s arrest. He left after shaking hands with Yuejun and warning her to be careful.

At the door Liang Xia suddenly cried out: "But you haven´t had your supper yet!" Mao Tou shook his head and left. Yuejun knew that his mother had died of a heart attack after an intense political meeting, and now no one was left to look after him.

Mao Tou´s father was an old cadre. After he had been repudiated, he had nothing to do each day except read books, see the doctor and visit friends. But this idle life could not keep him from fighting for the truth. The flames of truth had been burning in his heart and he was ready to sacrifice himself to defend it. If Liang Feng were alive, he would do as he did, as thousands of cadres, young people and masses were doing.

5

Come hell or high water, time marches on. Tempered by grief, doubt and anxiety, the people will come to see the truth.

On the eve of the Qing Ming Festival in April 1976, tragedy enveloped Tiananmen Square. Only the bright wreaths overlapping each other, and the loyal hearts of the people challenged the somber surroundings. Some wreaths climbed high into the sky, while others were very small. They stretched from the Monument to the People´s Heroes to the avenue. It was like a great mourning ceremony, unparalleled in history, dedicated by the people to Premier Zhou. The pine trees, covered with white paper flowers of mourning, were like a bank of snow. Gaily decorated baskets hung from the lampposts. Balloons floated in the air trailing streamers inscribed with the words: "Premier Zhou is immortal!" The crowds in the square were like a vast moving sea. They were silent, though indignant and at the end of their patience. The flames of truth in their hearts were at last about to blaze.

If the truth could be seen, thought Yuejun, it was in that square. The people were prepared to give their lives for the truth. She knew Liang Xia came every day to record poems and see the wreaths. Yuejun and Liang Xia were making their way to the monument in the middle of the square. They hung their basket on a pine tree. It contained pure white flowers, entwined with silver paper, which glistened like their tears.

Liang Xia remembered pacing in the quiet square in January after the premier's death when she heard people weeping. A middle-aged woman had lurched towards the monument crying: "Oh Premier, what are we going to do now? What?.." Her cries carried through the square and reverberated in Liang Xia's heart.

Suddenly Yuejun felt Liang Xia shudder. Looking in the same direction, she saw a streamer by the monument which read: "Even if the monsters spew out poisonous flames, the people will vanish them!" The street lights were dim, but the words seemed ablaze. This was the strength of the people! The people had begun to fight back!

Yuejun and Liang Xia walked among the crowds who were engrossed copying poems. Some far away could not see clearly, so others who were nearer to the monument read them aloud. If some had no paper, others would tear out pages from their notebooks. People wrote leaning on others' backs. All the crowds shared one purpose and cherished a deep love for Premier Zhou.

Unexpectedly, Mao Tou appeared. With a serious expression, he whispered something in Liang Xia's ear. She hurriedly pulled Yuejun from the crowd.

On their way home, Yuejun was filled with grief and anxiety. She was not afraid for herself, but very worried about Liang Xia and Mao Tou, and all the other young people in the square who were reciting poems. When she arrived home, she sat down at the desk in front of a photograph of Premier Zhou as a young man. Yuejun wished she could talk to Pei who had given her this photograph, but she had been in the hospital since March because of a heart attack. She had been working too hard.

Liang Xia was busy on her "raft". After a moment she emerged and poured herself a glass of water. She looked calm and happy, though pale. "Would you like some water, auntie?" she asked. There was no answer.

Then Yuejun said looking at her: "I want to say something to you. I guess you're going to put up some posters. It's too dangerous!" She paused before adding: "You're young. You must live to see the day.. You're the only survivor in your family."

Not in the least disturbed, Liang Xia replied: "I don't want to hide anything from you. But we must speak out and let those monsters know that we are still living. As you know, I'm not afraid of anything."

Yuejun said after a pause, tears streaming down her face "Then let me go! I'm old, but I can do it as well as you can!"

"You?" Amazed, Liang Xia gazed at her kind, attractive, tear-stained face. She too began to weep, though she tried to hold back her tears.

"Xia!" Yuejun hugged her tightly. Her tears dropped on the girl's hair, while Liang Xia's wet her breast.

Liang Xia soon dried her eyes. There was no time for a good cry. It was as if she had heard a bugle call. Flames of love and hatred blazed in her heart, melting it. She had thought of telling Yuejun that she had already distributed some leaflets in the trolleys and parks. Some had expressed her views, while others contained only one sentence: "Down with the White-Boned Demon - Jiang Qing, the cause of all disasters!" She was sure that there would not be any trouble, but still it was better not to involve Yuejun. She decided to keep her in the dark and so she changed the subject: "All right, I won't go now. Where are you going, auntie?"

"I'm serious," Yuejun protested.

"So am I." She wiped away her tears. "You must rest. You're too excited." With this, she went to make up Yuejun's bed and quietly slipped two sleeping pills into a glass of water. Handing it to her, she persuaded Yuejun to lie down.

Soon Yuejun felt very sleepy so she lay down, while Liang Xia paced the floor, cheerfully. "You should put some more clothes on," Yuejun advised, noticing Liang Xia was wearing only one sweater. "You must take care of yourself!" Then she wondered if she was really getting old, as she was feeling so tired.

Yuejun fell asleep and was unaware that Liang Xia had tidied up the room. Before leaving, she had fondled the cello and turned to gaze again and again at the screen which shielded Yuejun's bed. Finally she made up her mind and gingerly opening the door went out...

That night she did not return. Two, then three nights passed and she had still not come home.

One evening after her discharge from the hospital, Pei came to visit Yuejun. It was already summer. Through the window, the stars shone. The two women sat facing each other in silence. After a while, Yuejun took a notebook out of a drawer, saying: "I found this yesterday. Xia took notes in it."

Pei was startled when she flipped through the pages to read: "I won't live under the same sky with the sworn enemy of my family and my country!" She read the sentence again and again before saying confidently: "Don't be sad. I believe she'll come back some day."

Yuejun nodded: "I hope so. I know where Mao Tou is imprisoned. But I've no news of Xia."

"We'll try to locate her." The notebook was clenched tightly in Pei's hand.

Yuejun heaved a sigh: "Recently I feel as if we've been playing the same piece of music interminably but it may break off at any moment now."

"Don't worry. We'll end this symphony on a triumphant, magnificent note. To tell the truth, in the past half a year, we were worried about you. Someone tried to blame Liang's mistakes on you. But we told them nothing. In the last two months, an instruction came from our ministry to investigate the relationship between you and Liang Xia, but we refused to do it."

Rising to her feet, Yuejun declared: "Tell them Liang Xia's my daughter. I'll adopt her as my own daughter." Her worn, sweet face brightened, and determination shone in her eyes.

Pei grasped her hand firmly.

That night Yuejun dreamed that she was playing her cello in concert. The music from the cello was splendid and triumphant. In the audience a pair of dark eyes danced to the melodies. They belonged to Liang Xia.

Then suddenly it was Liang Xia and not she who was playing on stage. Her skillful playing was inspiring and encouraging. Happy tears poured down her cheeks. The stage lights shone on her white gauze and silver-threaded dress and on her glistening tears. The powerful music reverberated inside and outside the hall. She played what was in her heart and in the hearts of the people.

"Father! Dear father!" Liang Xia suddenly cried out. Her voice merged with the splendid music flying to the clouds. In the clouds appeared the Monument to the People's Heroes shining like the sun and the moon, with inscriptions personally made by Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou. Among the names of heroes was Liang Feng's. Some were known to everyone, some were ordinary people, while other heroes did not have their names mentioned. But they were all heroes of China nevertheless. They devoted their entire lives to the cause of liberation and communism. Though they have all died for one reason or another, they still live in our hearts. Their contributions are immortal and they will be forever remembered.

The dream of the people will be fulfilled. The reactionaries will be smashed. This is historically inevitable.

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Translated by Song Shouquan

LESSON 6
VOICES FROM THE NEW GENERATION

INTRODUCTION:

In this lesson, students will be introduced to a wide variety of modern Chinese values and value conflicts through excerpts from three short stories. These stories represent the voice of the new generation of Chinese writers and of the peers for whom they were writing. Chinese writing of the 1980's strongly reflects the new concerns with individualism, material benefits, personal choice and freedom of expression.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will develop an awareness and understanding of recent Chinese literature.
2. Students will identify values expressed in the short stories.
3. Students will be able to compare the values expressed in Chinese literature with their own values and ideals.

TEACHING TIME: one period

MATERIALS

Xiao Jin (Handout 10)
A Night in the City (Handout 11)
Bus Aria (Handout 12)

PROCEDURE

1. Distribute copies of the short story excerpts before the lesson day. Tell the students to make a list of quotes which clearly illustrate a value held by someone in the story, or a societal value which is implicit. These quote lists will be shared in class.

2. On class day, divide the class into groups of four. Have the students share their quotes with each other and discuss the values that they have listed. Ask each group to choose the quote that they feel is the most unusual or which best exemplifies either a similarity or difference between Chinese and American culture.

3. Have each group share their quote and comments with the rest of the class. The teacher should encourage discussion.

4. Discuss as a class the similarities between these excerpts and the story "Melody in Dreams."

HANDOUT 10

XIAO JIN

By Hang Ying

(Excerpted from Chinese Literature, February 1982, pp.66-80)

The unexpected result of the opinion poll collected over a week from the customers placed me in a very awkward position. She came first with 1,899 votes, much more than the runners-up. I was stunned.

It had been our new manager Old Guo's idea to ask the customers to vote for the most efficient shop assistant. "The customers know who's best. It'll help us improve our work." He made us put a big box at the entrance of our store. Then he told each of the staff to wear a badge with a number on it.

I was the secretary of the Youth League. In the past, when people raised their hands to vote, I was sure of the outcome, for I had done a lot of work beforehand. I'd find an outstanding person, and recommend him at meetings of the League. People would get the message and know who to vote for. But this time it was different. All Old Guo said was, "Let the customers decide." Now they had chosen a pretty face, neither a Party nor a Youth League member, not even a prospective one!

I had expected Wang Xianshu, no.59, to be chosen. She had been praised and recommended by us for the last six months. The former Party secretary had proposed making her a second Wang Shuxian. That was me. Our names were almost the same. I was in my thirties and had no boyfriend. But I did have lots of titles such as secretary of the Youth League branch, member of the Party committee, veteran advanced worker, model worker, model of getting married late...I wanted Wang Xianshu to achieve the same. She stood at my counter, doing my old job. She copied my example in every way, arriving before dawn and staying on with the second shift. She mopped the floor and cleaned the toilets. Like me, she wore her hair without a fringe, her short pigtails tied with dark rubber bands. Even her jacket seemed to be one of my old hand-me-downs! But this image only won her half the votes.

The winner was Xiao Jin, the girl at the candy counter. Her number was 163, but the young men who often wandered in from the steel works nearby called her "no. 1". At first I didn't know what they meant. Later I found out that they had secretly rated our girls according to their looks. This alone made her unqualified to receive the glorious title of model worker.

2

The awards were to be given out the following week at a meeting attended by our leaders, journalists and radio reporters, staff from other stores and some customers. I sought Old Guo out, suggesting we talk things over first so that we would not get ourselves into an awkward situation. Old Guo agreed and told me to call an enlarged Party committee meeting that evening.

A few of us raised three points against Xiao Jin. First, she was too fussy about clothes and too frivolous, so she had been chosen for her beauty by some customers. Her votes might have been manipulated by bad people. Second, she didn't like her job, but preferred acting in plays in the Cultural Palace. Third, she was a flirt. Several times she had invited boys to visit her in her room and eat sweets.

Others disagreed, claiming that her votes showed she was popular, quick and capable, that she really put her heart into her work, selling the most. Socialist competition meant good work. Since the customers had voted for her, we should accept their choice.

In the end Guo smiled and said, "The poll was democratic. We'll ask Wang Shuxian to find out more about Xiao Jin, and the tell the trade union the views of our customers."

That night, I tossed and turned in bed, both happy and worried; happy because I felt I could prove my case, worried because I would need sound arguments to convince Old Guo. He knew quite a lot about our store and had already formed his own opinions though he had not been there long.

At dawn, I made for the store to check the account books of the sweet counter, intending to hit Xiao Jin where she was weakest.

As I got off my bike, I saw a bright red one already in the shed. Only she dared ride such a flashy bike, with various gadgets attached! The bike was just like her! More annoyed, I wondered why she had come so early? To tamper with her account books?...

I hurried to her counter. It was deserted, and the books were under lock and key. Then I looked in the changing room, the table tennis room and the library. She was nowhere to be found. The store was not open yet. The corridors were deserted. Where could she be?

Then I heard a faint sound of singing from the fifth floor. I quickly went up to the auditorium used only for meetings. No one was there. The singing was coming from higher up. Curiosity drove me up two flights of stairs to the roof where I saw her singing.

As she sang she twisted her body as if dancing. I'd never been to a dance and I'd seen few foreign films. She was probably copying disco dancing. She did not realize she was being watched.

The sky was turning rosy with the rising sun. I was so embarrassed by her performance that I closed my eyes.

I ought to admit that she was beautiful, young and vivacious, but, being prejudiced, I found her repugnant. Her healthy red cheeks and lips looked as though she wore make-up. Her bright eyes and long eyelashes were seductive. Even more arresting was the wild expression in them. Her fashionable clothes and that bike of hers...It was scandalous! So she came here early in the morning when no one was about to indulge in such a ludicrous performance. How could she be a model?

Then she suddenly stopped singing and stumbled towards the railing as if intending to throw herself over. My heart missed a beat. I was on the point of moving forward to stop her, when she suddenly turned around. Leaning against the railing she sighed, pushed back her long hair despondently and muttered, "I feel empty and oppressed. Time weighs heavily on my hands. Very soon, my face will be wrinkled. My hair will go grey..." She began sobbing and then broke down. I raised my hand to my face and mourned my lost youth.

I was trying hard to control my feelings, when she stopped crying and stretched her arms towards the sky and sighed, "Let me pass my time in music and dancing..." Again she crazily twisted her body, twirling round and round, her dishevelled hair covering her face. I became worried. Had something happened to her? Why was she so miserable? Perhaps...she had gone mad? But then I thought, no. This was her true rotten self.

My investigation had been most successful. I left with a contented smile.

3

The head of the candy counter and I found nothing wrong with the account books after spending a whole morning on them. I asked him if Xiao Jin had been taking sweets. He denied it. So I let him return to his counter.

My head ached after tackling figures for hours and finding nothing incriminating. Changing my tactics, I went back to the floor to see why she was so popular.

The store was crowded, the sweet counter even more so. People visiting the city, those about to get married or calling on friends and relations, all wanted to buy sweets. Being small I could not see clearly who was at the counter behind the throng of customers. Then I caught a glimpse of a head of rich hair held in place by a golden clip, the kind girls of the Dai nationality wear, with a little chain which swung as her head moved. That calculated bit of show got my hackles up.

I stood there finding fault with her as she worked efficiently. All smiles, she asked the first customer in the line what he wanted. As she weighed it out for him, she asked the second what he wanted and told the third to make up his mind. At the same time she worked out how much to charge the first customer, checked it on the abacus, said how much money the customer gave her and how much the change was. Her skill earned her much praise.

The laymen watched for fun, the experts to see her skill. I noticed that she did not lower her head, but remembered to look and smile at the customers when she talked to them. All shop assistants were required to be friendly. It had taken me a long time to learn this. She must have taken special pains too.

But my favorable impression was soon chased away when I remembered her tasteless performance that morning. She was an entirely different person then. If I had not seen it with my own eyes, I would never have believed it. No one could be judged simply by her work; her ideology also counted. Even though she worked well, there was still something which revealed her true colors -- the dazzling hairpin. What a shameless hussy! Disgust rose in me.

Perhaps out of admiration or curiosity, onlookers who had not intended to buy anything lined up. Of course this increased business, but her way of attracting customers was too...

Impatient for his sweets, a child in his mother's arms at the end of the line began crying. The embarrassed mother slapped him, which made him howl for all he was worth. Xiao Jin asked the other customers, "How about letting this lady buy first. It's not good for this little boy to cry so much!"

When they agreed, she thanked them and asked the grateful woman to come to the front. But the boy still wailed. Xiao Jin gave him two sweets to stop him.

My heart sank. Though it was necessary to quiet the boy, she should not have given away sweets like that. Did she do it often, I wondered?

The woman protested. In the meantime Xiao Jin had finished weighing the sweets. Then she took two back. She told the woman, "Here. Don't worry. I haven't given you extra." After wrapping a few sweets in a small piece of paper, she put the rest into a bag which she tied neatly, helping the woman to put it in her basket. The smaller one she popped into the mother's pocket, saying, "This is for your little boy to eat on the way home, so you won't have to open the big bag." The woman couldn't thank her enough.

I had to hand it to her.

A soldier carrying a big holdall entered. He seemed in a hurry, looking at his watch again and again at the end of the line. After she had served two more customers, Xiao Jin noticed he was about to leave and called out to him, "Are you in a hurry?"

"Yes, I have a train to catch. I wanted to take some sweets back to my buddies."

She apologized to the customers again and let the soldier get his sweets. He saluted her and left happily.

Her skill and quick calculations enabled the customers to buy quickly...

How queer! Could such a cheap person be so enthusiastic about her work? Who was the real Xiao Jin, the one on the roof, or the one behind the counter? In spite of my prejudice, the satisfied customers streaming past her dispelled some of my doubts.

HANDOUT 11

A NIGHT IN THE CITY

by Wang Meng

(Excerpted from Chinese Literature, July 1980, pp.41-49)

...Before he had set off for this city, the head of his organization had given him a letter of introduction and had asked him to look up a certain company manager. "We were pals in the army," he told Chen, "The letter explains everything. Something's wrong with our Shanghai car. The driver and some comrades in our administration office have tried everywhere to get it repaired, but no one can fix it because they've got no spare parts. Now this friend of mine is in charge of motor maintenance and he once assured me that if I needed our car repaired, I should go to him. So you go and find him. Send me a telegram when it's settled."

There was nothing unusual in asking a friend, a comrade-in-arms, to do a favor. Why shouldn't someone in authority ask someone else with power and influence to repair his unit's car, which was, after all, state property? There was no reason to refuse, and Chen, who knew the importance of legs of mutton, never doubted the necessity of the errand. On the contrary, he ought to help his colleagues who need something from the big city. However, after accepting the mission, he felt a bit uncomfortable, as if wearing a pair of shoes which did not quite fit or a pair of trousers with different colored legs.

His chief, noticing his hesitation, had phoned him several times since his arrival, urging him to see to this business. "Well, I'm not doing this for myself," he encouraged himself. And so he had come all this way and, covered with mud, had now reached his destination.

Luckily, he met two children who confirmed that this was the place he was looking for. He climbed quickly to the fourth floor, found the flat door, and, having calmed down, knocked gently yet loudly enough to be heard.

No response. After a while, there was a slight noise from inside. Chen listened, his ear against the door. Probably music. He was somewhat relieved, as it would have disappointing not to find the man. He knocked loudly at the door again.

After the third knock, there came the sound of steps and then the turning of a lock. The door was opened to reveal a young man with a mop of unkept hair, in a pair of underpants and flipflops. The lines of his body with its bulging muscles gleamed white. "Who are you looking for?" he asked impatiently.

"Comrade X," Chen stated the name on the envelope.

"He's not in." The young man turned to close the door.

Chen stepped forward and, trying to speak in the standard city accent, introduced himself and then asked, "Perhaps you're his relative? May I leave a message?"

It was quite dark in the doorway, and Chen could not make out his features clearly. However, he felt instinctively that the young man frowned. After a momentary hesitation, he said, "Come in then." With that, he turned to go in, like a nurse leading a patient in to see the dentist.

Chen followed him in. It was quiet except for their steps. They passed more doors than Chen had ever seen before in one flat. As one of them was pushed open by the young man, Chen was assailed by the smell of liquor.

Inside, the lamplight was soft. On the bed lay a crumpled silk-covered quilt. There was a fashionable, shining floor lamp. The door of a bedside locker was ajar revealing a new sophisticated lock, just the kind many of Chen's friends had asked him to buy, which he had not seen in any store. Then he shifted his eyes to the rattan chairs, chaise-lounge and a round table. A stereo tape-recorder from abroad was playing a song, by a Hong Kong singer, soft, clear and sentimental. It sounded ridiculous. If this was played in his little town, people would be scared stiff. The only familiar object in the room was a half-filled glass of water on the locker, like a friend in a strange place.

Chen spotted a rickety square stool by the door and, pulling it over, sat down despite his dirty clothes. He began to explain why he was there. After two sentences, he paused, hoping the man would take the hint and turn down the volume of the recorder. As he failed to do this, Chen had to carry on. He found it difficult to express himself and could only stammer incoherently, unable to find the right words. Instead of "Please tell Comrade X to arrange this," he said, "Could you do me a favor?" as though he wanted to borrow money. When he should have said, "I've come to make contact with you," he humbly said, "I need your help." Even the voice was not like his, but rather like a blunt saw on wood.

Then he produced the letter, but the young man did not stand up from his chaise-lounge to take it. Though much older than he, Chen had to go over and hand it to him, getting a closer look at the pimply face, which wore an impatient, ignorant, conceited expression.

The young man flicked open the letter, glanced at it and smiled contemptuously, his left foot beating time to the music. Both the tape-recorder and the Hong Kong song were new to Chen. Though he did not exactly dislike the singing, he did not admire it. Unconsciously, a frown flitted across his face.

"Is this boss of yours really my father's old comrade-in-arms? I've never heard of him."

Chen felt insulted. Unable to check his anger, he retorted, "You're too young! Your father may not have mentioned him to you."

"My father says everyone who needs his car repaired claims to be his old army buddy."

Chen's face grew burning hot, his heart beat faster and beads of sweat stood on his forehead. "What do you mean? He went to Yanan in 1936! His elder brother is commander of C- military region!"

Chen was in such a fluster when mentioning that commander that he suddenly felt dizzy and perspired profusely.

But all he got was a sneer, even more contemptuous.

Chen lowered his head, utterly ashamed of himself.

"Let me put it his way," the young man said, standing up as if about to make a report, "Nowadays, you've got to have two things to clinch any deal. First, goods. What can you give us in return?"

"Goods?" Chen asked himself. "What do we have? Legs of mutton?" he muttered as if talking to himself.

"That won't do!" The young man smiled again. His contempt had turned to pity. "Secondly, to be frank, you need to know a trick or two... Why do you have to see my father? So long as you have goods and someone able, you can put through the deal in anyone's name." After a brief pause, he added, "My father's away at the seaside on business." He avoided saying "convalescing."

Chen's head was swimming. As he got to the door, he suddenly cocked his ears, for the recorder was now playing a familiar Hungarian waltz. It was good music. He imagined a leaf dancing over an azure lake surrounded on three sides by snow-capped mountains. And his home town was on the other side of one of them. A wild goose alighted on the water

Chen, as though drunk, rushed down the dark stairs. He heard something thumping, but could not tell whether it was his heart or footsteps. He left the building and looked up. The pale orange colored lamp on the slanting pole had turned scarlet like a monster's eye...

HANDOUT 12

BUS ARIA

By Liu Xinwu

(Excerpted from Chinese Literature, Winter 1986, pp.81-105)

Xia Xiaoli graduated from high school in the suburbs, where she lived with her parents, both of them factory workers. Her high school was an ordinary one. In the whole school only three students made it into university. Just as she was graduating, the Beijing Public Transport Company advertised to employ some ticket-sellers. She answered the call on her own initiative.

Who could have known that following the adoption of new economic policies, the so-called "individual enterprise sector" would develop so rapidly? You never hear about those enterprises that go bankrupt or barely scrape by; everywhere you hear only tales of how so-and-so has made a bundle. And they aren´t all exaggerations. One of Xia Xiaoli´s classmates is now the "candied haw king" (i.e. candied oversized cranberries) of the area around her school. With sticks of candied haws produced in a workshop in his house he has cornered the wholesale market in that part of town. One might never know just how big the numbers are in his account passbook, but it is plain to see that he already has the "great eight" (i.e. eight pieces of furniture --   ). In fact, Xia Xiaoli has even been invited to his house to watch videos. Comparing her situation with his, Xia Xiaoli feels increasingly regretful over her stupid insistence on taking the job as ticket-seller. If she´d known things might turn out this way, she could have stayed at home for a while, waiting for the chance to get hold of an individual business permit and start a great enterprise of her own. After all, she is no dummy.

Xia Xiaoli never used to care much about the way she dressed. But lately, there have been just too many things around liable to stimulate her sense of fashion. Just when she thought the "Huazi" line of cosmetics was the dernier cri, the television started to advertise a new line, "Wella Balsam." As soon as she bought a new eyebrow pencil, the cosmetics counter at the department store started selling eyebrow tweezers again. Lately Hong Kong style beauty parlors have been popping up on street after street in Beijing, all of them staffed exclusively by skilled beauticians from Guangzhou. "Little Paris", "Autumn Girl", "New Wave", "Mini" - even the names alone are enough to set one´s heart a-thumping! After attending a few fashion exhibitions, she has learned what the "international color of the year" is, and just what is meant by the terms "X-form", "H-form" and "A-form" clothing. The Lido Department Store on the raised mall off East Changan Avenue has so many kinds of jewelry, both real and fake...As soon as she bought a pair of high-heeled pumps, someone told her that this year´s newest women´s shoes have no heel at all.

The passengers really should try to understand Xia Xiaoli´s feelings and be patient with her.

She might not be as dazzling as flowers and jade, but she is in the prime of youth. Besides, the love of beauty is a wonderful trait, nothing to be scorned.

The problem is that she is less and less happy with her job selling tickets. She hates the blue company uniform and its yellow buttons with the compass design. The cloth is poorly made. The transportation team leader says its worth 48 yuan, but when she took it to a consignment shop to get an estimate on it, they said it would only bring 9 yuan. She refuses to obey the regulations that order the wearing of the uniform. She dresses the way she likes when she sells tickets.

She is jealous of women passengers who dress better than herself, especially those who come from other places.

Once, a woman from somewhere else asked her, "Comrade, where do I catch the bus to go to the Summer Palace?"

Looking askance at the woman, she noted the fineness of her western-style suit and the little flashes of light from her earrings, which might have been pure gold or electroplated... Huh! She thought to herself. What a getup! It is obviously her first time in Beijing - listen to her timid little whine - and she doesn´t even know where the Summer Palace is! Xiaoli sneered and said meanly, "This bus doesn´t go to the Summer Palace! If you want to know where to change buses, get off and ask somebody!"

The woman was quite hurt. It was her first time in Beijing, and she had been thrilled as they passed by Tiananmen Square moments before. This was the capital. She had expected everything and everybody here to be better than elsewhere in China. She was ecstatic at the prospect of taking a stroll in the Summer Palace. Everyone at home was waiting for her description of her trip to Beijing. But even such a simple question about how to change buses had brought a chilling response from this ticket-seller with eyes like ice cubes!

She could not keep from speaking her mind: "Comrade, how can you talk like that?"

"How am I talking?" Xia Xiaoli shot back. "This is called Beijing dialect. Do you understand? I told you this bus isn´t going to the Summer Palace; what else do you want?"

The woman was getting agitated: "What king of attitude is that?"

"Like it or lump it!" Xia Xiaoli said with a toss of her head. "Try taking a taxi! Or how about a limousine?"

The woman in fancy clothes was holding back tears of rage. Her delight at going to the Summer Palace was completely destroyed.

Sometimes passengers think: Why doesn´t the bus company take stern measures against drivers and ticket-sellers like Xia Xiaoli? If they don´t change their ways, why not fire them?

Such suggestions have actually been offered to the bus company via post and telephone.

It´s not strange that these suggestions appear. Weren´t television and movies full of such stories of "reform" two years ago? Newly appointed "reformists" with "iron fists" were giving slackers and troublemakers the old "fried squid" (firing them). You won't get down to work? You won't change your ways? You're still making trouble? OK then, get your bedding and scram!

But not only are Xiaoli and company not afraid of such measures; they would welcome them with open arms.

A full quarter of ten thousand bus drivers in the city have requested a transfer to other work units. Some even want to quit. Some have gone to find new sources of income without even waiting for approval -- now they don't go to work.

There are a few ticket-sellers who are doing this kind of thing, too. Xia Xiaoli herself even applied for release once. When her request was denied, she unleashed her anger on the passengers. She often doesn't bother to sell tickets. Company regulations stipulate that even if one's ticket revenues do not reach a certain level, it will not affect one's bonus. But only if one's sales exceed a certain level is there the possibility of an extra bonus, which is rather limited. Everyone on Xia Xiaoli's route has monthly passes; hardly anyone buys tickets. At any rate, she knows she won't get the extra bonus, so she doesn't even try.

Xia Xiaoli is not afraid of getting fired; at one point, she even "quit."

A few months ago, she suddenly disappeared. She never came to work. When the transportation team cadre went to her house to look for her, her parents said, "We don't know where she went either! Maybe she went to Shenyang to see her aunt!" Actually she was in Beijing. With the help of the "candied haw king" she had contacted a foreign trade firm and gotten a job as a receptionist, which mostly involves bringing tea to foreign businessmen. Even though it was a so-called "temporary job", the salary could not compare with that of a ticket-seller; however, there were often perks to be had, and Xia Xiaoli felt the job was at once dignified and undemanding.

However, the transportation team eventually caught up with her and explained the situation to her new employers, who of course could not keep her after that.

Finally one day Xia Xiaoli returned to the dispatcher's office wearing the nifty uniform she had gotten at her temporary job with its smart Hong Kong-style sky blue necklace, snowflake earrings and stylish light blue vinyl pumps.

It was practically a case of "the newly vested official returning covered in glory to his native village!"

Even Han Dongsheng, walking into the dispatcher's office and seeing her for the first time in a long time, did not give the slightest impression that he thought she had done anything wrong. Looking at her, he merely exclaimed in a pleased tone, "So! You've traded in your BB gun for a bomb!"

Xia Xiaoli was surrounded by women ticket-sellers, some feeling the material of her suit, some asking where she had had her hair done and how much it had cost, some wrinkling their noses and taking closer sniffs of her perfume. Pleased, Xia Xiaoli stood complacently on one foot, for someone was trying on her shoe. The girl trying it on blushed deeply and felt a strange surge of emotion.

"Hey!" Xia Xiaoli called to Han Dongsheng, "Have some preserved prunes!"

She'd brought a package of these and laid them on the dispatcher's table, inviting everyone to have some.

Han Dongsheng had one.

"These are what they offer to foreign businessmen now, not toffee!" she said, displaying her mastery of the mysterious ways of foreign trade.

The dispatcher ate one. Chewing it, she asked Xia Xiaoli, "Hey, when are you coming back to work?"

As if bestowing a favor, Xia Xiaoli answered, "How about tomorrow?"

Disciplinary measures? Firing? From company heads to team leaders, all the bosses know such drastic measures are not as effective as constantly reminding these drivers and ticket-sellers they will always be employees of the company. Since over a third of the drivers and ticket-sellers have requested a transfer due to inadequate salary, it has been very difficult for the company to maintain a good attendance rate. The most the company can hope to do is to keep its employees from running off to find other jobs; if they do, the company uses the same strategy to recover them that it used with Xia Xiaoli. If the bus company won't release them, they won't be able to get an individual business permit nor find permanent work in another unit. Once found out, the only thing they can do is to submit to their fate and go back to driving buses and selling tickets.

LESSON 7
CHINA THROUGH THE EYES OF THE THEATRE

INTRODUCTION

In China, teachers are said to be the engineers of the soul, and theater people have been called the conscience of Chinese society. In this lesson, heroes, revolutionaries, and daydreamers contend to explain how China has changed, and how some young intellectuals question the development of society.

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will:

1. Be introduced to three types of Chinese theatre.
2. Understand changes from traditional to contemporary theater.

TEACHING TIME one to five class periods

MATERIALS

An adaptation of the Beijing Opera, "Beauty Defies Tyranny" (Handout 13)
An adaptation of "Do Not Spit At Random" (Handout 14)
An adaptation of "Genius or Idiot" (Handout 15)
Discussion Questions

PROCEDURE

1. Divide the class into groups of not less than six students.

2. Give each group a script of one of the three plays. To save class time this might be done as homework. Be sure that each student reads the entire play and introduction. Have each student choose a role or assign roles yourself.

3. Allow each group to discuss its play and plan the staging.

4. Plays should be performed in the following order: 1) Beauty Defies Tyranny; 2) Do Not Spit At Random; 3) Genius or Idiot.

5. After each performance hold a discussion with the entire class about the play, using the appropriate discussion questions.

6. After all three plays have been performed, discuss the differences among them with the class.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Ask students to write a script that brings "Genius or Idiot" to a conclusion.

2. Ask students to write a one act play that tries to teach a social or moral lesson.

3. Research Chinese theater and write a paragraph or paper about your findings.

4. Draw or paint a scene from one of the adaptations.

5. Conduct a mock interview with the cast of one of the plays.

6. Create a set for one of these plays.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

"BEAUTY DEFIES TYRANNY"

1. What does this Chinese opera play tell us about Chinese traditional values?

   The play gives us insights into arranged marriages, filial piety and obedience, political power through family connections.

2. What does the play tell us about the role of Chinese women in imperial society?

   We discover that in spite of woman's traditional subservient role, Yan Rong possessed a strong character. She was able to achieve a certain solidarity with her maid, and to use manipulation as a means to escape a situation from which she could not normally escape.

"DO NOT SPIT AT RANDOM"

1. In what ways does the play exemplify Mao's famous speech?

   The play illustrates all the major aspects of Mao's speech; educating the people, taking the side of the workers and the peasants, throwing oneself into the thick of political struggle and using art for a social purpose.

2. How do the roles and responsibilities of the main characters in this play differ from those portrayed in "Beauty Defies Tyranny"?

   The young woman pioneer doesn't have to manipulate or play tricks to gain her goals. She is concerned with public social norms instead of personal concerns.

3. How do social pressures operate in each play?

   Both plays illustrate the effects of social pressure. In the first play, it is within the family; in the second, in the nation and community.

"GENIUS OR IDIOT"

1. How does this contemporary play compare with Mao's speech and the play, "Don't Spit at Random"?

   The play criticizes the conformity and collectivism of Mao's China by satirizing the lack of personal freedom -- "We are all children of the nation, no use for name tags."

2. What is the meaning of the mortuary scene?

   It points out that both old and new are needed in the building of modern Chinese society.

HANDOUT 13

BEAUTY DEFIES TYRANNY
INTRODUCTION

The traditional operas of China, as represented by the Peking Opera, possess prominent national styles and features. They are an important part of the country's great artistic tradition.

A complex form of stage art that stresses both singing and dancing, the traditional Chinese opera consists primarily of "singing, acting, reciting, and fighting," supplemented by dances, unique costumes and equipment, simple scenery, and accompanied by gongs, drums, strings and bamboos. It is the product of the diligent creative labor of opera workers over the past 1,000 years, during which it has drawn lavishly on both art and life for nourishment. These plays possess an extraordinary power for representing life. Besides their enchanting artistic appeal, this realism has enabled Chinese opera to retain its popularity with the masses to the present day.

BACKGROUND

The Qin dynasty, the first in Chinese history to unite the nation's numerous warring states into one cohesive empire, only lasted for 14 years. The capable but despotic emperor Qin Shi Huang (First Emperor) ruled for 12 years, and was succeeded by one of his sons, the muddleheaded and dissipated Qin Er Shi (Second Emperor), who managed to rule for only two years before the empire collapsed. Upon the death of his father, Qin Er Shi came to power with the aid of a treacherous minister Zhao Gao, who helped him to topple his elder brother. Once on the throne, the cruel young emperor ordered all of his brothers and sisters slain and interred in a burial pit near his father's tomb. In recent years, archeological excavations of the tomb of Qin Shi Huang have unearthed the skeletal remains of these Qin princes and princesses.

Qin Er Shi fell in love with the daughter of Minister Zhao Gao, the comely and intelligent Yan Rong, who despised him and therefore had no choice but to feign mental derangement to escape being reduced to the emperor's plaything.

(From Huang Shang, Tales From Peking Opera, New World Press: Beijing, 1985, pp.5-11)

BEAUTY DEFIES TYRANNY

CAST: Yan Rong (YR)
Zhao Gao (ZG)
Qin Er Shi (QE)
Maid
Court Officials

SCENE 1

SCENE 1: In the main room of Zhao Gao's home. Yan Rong is sitting with her father making ink.

YR: Father, I am tired. Do you need me any more?

ZG: No. No!

YR: I am going to bed now father. Your ink is finished.

ZG: Go. Go! I need to think.

(As she leaves, QE enters to talk with ZG. They talk in hushed tones and laugh knowingly to each other. As YR enters her bedroom her mute maid speaks to her in her own form of sign language.)

YR: There is what? A powerful man is with my father. Who is it?

(Before the maid can answer, ZG calls.)

ZG: Yan Rong! Come here ! Come quickly!

(When Yan Rong returns to the room, ZG is jubilant.)

ZG: Congratulations my daughter. Tomorrow morning it is off to the palace with you. You are to be the wife of the emperor.

YR: Father, you are the Prime Minister. How could you act with a heart so full of shame? You know how the emperor collects women.

ZG: How dare you disobey your father's instructions! How dare you violate his Majesty's sacred edict?

(YR runs to her room and throws herself on the bed crying.)

MAID: (Sign language)

YR: What! Act as if I'm crazy? That will never work..(thoughtful pause)... or will it?

ZG: (Talking to himself) Tomorrow Yan Rong will be married to that stupid emperor, and I will be the most powerful man in all

China.

SCENE 2

SCENE 2: The next day at the imperial court. ZG is at QE´s right hand.

ZG: Yan Rong is here your majesty.

QE: Yes, but what is wrong with her? She is not wearing the proper clothes. Her beauty has vanished.

(YR approaches the throne but does not bow.)

YR: Your majesty! (She laughs a loud strange laugh.) You think that it is a big joke that I am insane,..don´t you?

QE: Insane? When did you...

YR: You old scoundrel you!

QE: Watch your tongue!

YR: (To the crowd) The world belongs to the people. How can he claim it as his own?

(The crowd murmurs to each other. They are amazed that anyone would address the throne in such a manner.)

QE: If you continue like this, I´ll have your head chopped off!

YR: Yes! Yes! Yes! You know, of course, that once you chop off my head, it will grow right back.

QE: (To ZG) How dare you bring her here! (Shouting) Take her away!

ZG: (Walking backwards and bowing to the emperor) I´m sorry, I´m sorry, I´m sorry.

(ZG escorts YR out of the room. Crying with joy, she falls into the arms of her maid.)

YR: I´m free! I´m free!

HANDOUT 14

DO NOT SPIT AT RANDOM

INTRODUCTION

In his "Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art," Mao Zedong defined the role of both art and literature in Chinese society:

> (Our purpose is) to ensure that literature and art fit well into the whole revolutionary machine as a component part, that they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy, and that they help the people fight the enemy with one heart and one mind...
>
> Our literary and art workers must accomplish this task and Shift their stand; they must gradually move their feet over to the side of the workers, peasants and soldiers, to the side of the proletariat, through the process of going into their midst and into the thick of practical struggles and through the process of studying Marxism and society. Only in this way can we have a literature and art that are truly for the workers, peasants and soldiers, a truly proletarian literature and art...
>
> In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics. Proletarian literature and art are part of the whole proletarian revolutionary cause; they are, as Lenin said, cogs and wheels in the whole revolutionary machine.

"Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art" (May 1942), Selected Works, Vol. III, pp. 70-84.

The following play is a street play. It was performed many times on the street corners of Hangzhou and Shanghai. It was written by the Hangzhou Stage Group in support of the patriotic health movement. It was a "revolutionary weapon for the broad masses of the people.." to fight spitting at random. (Spitting has been a major sanitation and health problem in both old and new China.)

DO NOT SPIT AT RANDOM

CAST:

Young Pioneer (YP)
Passer-by (PB)
Policeman (PM)
Mother
Crowd members (1 to 8)

SCENE:

A young pioneer with a megaphone comes out from a crowd in the street or from among the audience in a theater or a classroom.

YP: Dear uncles and aunts, please do not spit at random. Spitting at random on the ground is a most deplorable habit. It helps to spread germs and diseases. Dear uncles and aunts, if you want to spit, do so into a cuspidor. If there is no cuspidor at hand, then spit into a handkerchief.

PB: (Walks across stage making noises as if he were going to spit) Hack...hawk! (Spits on the ground.)

YP: Uncle, uncle, don´t spit on the ground. Please wipe it up with a piece of paper.

PB: My young friend, with the cuspidor so far away, where do you think I should spit?

YP: You can go to the cuspidor. It´s only a few steps away.

PB: I´d have to go there and come back again. How do you think I´m going to catch my bus?

YP: Uncle, don´t you know there are many germs in spit? When it dries, the germs will be scattered everywhere, and, by breathing the air people may be infected with such diseases as typhoid, diphtheria, or tuberculosis.

PB: I don´t have tuberculosis; there cannot be any germs in my spit.

YP: It´s a social obligation to refrain from spitting at random. If everyone spits and insists that there can be no germs in what he has spit, how can we be patriotic and keep ourselves in good health?

One of the crowd: Wipe up the spit quickly.

PB: You want me to squat there and wipe away the spit? But I have no time for that. Besides, I am not used to doing that sort of thing. (Prepares to go.)

YP: Uncle, uncle, don't go. I haven't finished with you yet.

PB: I have to go home now to my dinner and have no time to carry on a conversation with you.

One of the crowd: Hey, you come back here!

YP: (Offering a piece of paper) Uncle, please wipe it up with this piece of paper.

PB: I won't do it.

YP: How can you refuse to carry out a social obligation?

PB: Are you lecturing me?

(Here a number of actors come out of the crowd to speak.)

Crowd: Don't argue with him. Call the police. Police! Comrade Policeman!

PB: I won't wipe it up, but I promise not to spit again.

Crowd: Comrade, what is your unit?

PB: That's none of your business.

Crowd: Why isn't it my business? When you refuse to carry out a public obligation, everyone is entitled to criticize you.

PM: (Enters) What's happened here?

Crowd: He spit at random and refuses to accept criticism. He would not listen to the advice of a child. And he's such a big man. He is no better than this child. And he is a Party member too! Probably a backward one.

PM: All right, it's clear to me now. (Addressing the crowd) Comrades, what do you think we should do with such a man?

Crowd: He should be criticized and fined. He should be made the subject of a wall newspaper. He should be taken to the police station.

PM: Oh well, if you won't wipe it up, I'll do it for you. But, first of all, may I know what unit you belong to?

PB: Well, uh...

(The voice of a woman is heard off stage calling someone.)

Mother: Xiao-Ying, Xiao-Ying.

YP: Oh... Mother!

Mother: There you are. We've been waiting for you a long time. Your dinner is cold.

YP: I haven't finished my work yet.

Mother: Work? What sort of work?

YP: Someone has spit on the ground and refuses to accept criticism. Unless he cleans it up, I'm not going to let him go.

Mother: (Recognizes the passer-by) Oh, is that you, Comrade Chen?

PB: Er...Yes, it's me teacher Chen.

YP: Mother, you know him?

Mother: Yes, he is Comrade Chen the accountant for the cotton mill.

PM: Good. Thank You. I think this is the best way. (He bends down.) I'll just draw a circle around the spit and write down the name of your unit and your name beside it.

PB: Comrade, don't! Don't write down the name of my unit! Comrades and my young friend, please pardon me this once. You may write my name there, but please do not write the name of our mill too. Our mill has already signed a patriotic health pact.

PM: Yet you break the pact?

PB: All right, I'll clean it up. I promise not to do the same thing again.

YP: Here, take this piece of paper.

(The passer-by squats down to wipe up the spit. The crowd, satisfied, disperses.)

PM: (To mother) Comrade, your child is really a good Young Pioneer. She is a young heroine.

Mother: Thank you.

YP: (Walks to center stage) Dear uncles and aunts, please do not spit at random. Spitting at random is a most deplorable habit...

HANDOUT 15

GENIUS OR IDIOT

INTRODUCTION

In July of 1986, a group of California teachers were fortunate enough to be in Shanghai for the opening of the Shanghai Youth Theater's production of Genius or Idiot.

It depicted the tribulations of a young student who was going through a search for his true identity. In this struggle to find himself, he relived some of the many problems of China's recent past. The audience was mainly college-aged, and the theater seemed to be sold out even though the price, 1.40 Yuan, was approximately one half of a college students daily stipend.

The play functioned on many levels. It combined black humor, slapstick and serious drama. The teachers, not having the language skills necessary to follow the dialogue, were still enthralled with the visual presentation. The next day we were fortunate enough to meet with the Company and question the director and the entire cast about the play's meaning and its reception by the audience. Many teachers were worried that a play which openly criticized both the Communist Party and Chinese society would not be allowed to be performed for long. We were assured by the Company manager that under the policies of the current Chinese leadership intellectuals were allowed that license. We were told that China was developing a firm and unchanging base of artistic freedom.

The adaptation of the following two scenes should give you some indication of the type of criticism that is occurring in China today.

GENIUS OR IDIOT

CAST:
- Student
- Nurse
- Old Comrade (OC)
- Infants (1 to 5)
- Fathers (1 to 5)

PROPS:
- Name tags for babies
- a sheet
- a table

SCENE: In a hospital. Student and Nurse are standing in front of the newborn infant unit which is down the hall from the mortuary.

SCENE 1

Nurse: What are you doing here?

Student: I´m a reporter. How do you like your job here? Is it hard?

Nurse: I don´t have time to talk to you now. Why don´t you come back some other time?

Student: When are you not busy?

Nurse: Never!

Student: Who shall I interview? I´m a writer.

Nurse: (Shrugs while walking away) Anybody you like.

(The student turns and sees the newborn unit.)

Student: I´ll interview these babies. Their minds are untainted.

(He walks in and starts asking the babies questions.)

Student: How do you like Chinese society so far?

Baby 1: Wah! Wah!

Student: Oh, good. I like it too. (To Baby 2) Do you have your work assignment yet?

Baby 2: Yeah! Yeah!

Student: Fine, I wish I had mine. (To Baby 3) Which university are you going to go to?

Baby 3: Baa. Baa.

Student: Beijing University, Wow! Let me have your name tags so I can get them straight for the story. (He picks up the name tags and walks to the side of the stage.)

(Nurse enters with parents).

Nurse: Here are your babies.

Father 1: Which one is mine? I can´t tell them apart! (He inspects one of the babies.) This one´s not mine! I had a boy.

Father 2: So did I, let me see.

Nurse: Someone has taken the name tags. How could this be?

(The nurse looks up and sees the student.)

Nurse: What are you doing here?

Student: I´m a writer, I´m interviewing the babies.

Nurse: What did you do with the name tags?

Student: Name tags! We are building a perfect communist society. The family is going to wither away. We are all children of the nation. There is no need for name tags!

Father 1: Get him!

(They chase the student around the stage or classroom.)

SCENE 2

SCENE: The hospital mortuary

(The student runs in and hides under a corpse recently brought in. The nurse and the fathers look in but can´t find him and leave.)

Nurse: (While leaving) He´s not there.

(The student crawls out from under the table where the corpse is lying under the sheet.)

Student: That´s the problem with being a writer. You´re either chased by the living or crushed by the dead.

(The corpse starts to move under the sheet.)

OC: Uh! Oh! What am I doing here?

(He sits up on the table and looks around.)

OC: Where am I?

Student: You're in the hospital. Who are you?

OC: I'm Comrade Wang -- member of the People's Congress. Who are you?

Student: I'm a student and a writer who is going to help lead China into a new and modern world.

OC: Not without people like me your not.

(The old comrade gets off the table and walks towards the student.)

Student: Your time has past. You're old and worn out!

(The student and the old comrade meet and start to push each other across the stage.)

Student: We are going to create modern China!

OC: You are forgetting our struggle!

Student: You are holding us back!

OC: You can go nowhere without us!

(They both get tired and sit down on opposite sides of the stage glaring at each other.)

LESSON 8
A ONE-ACT SOCIODRAMA

INTRODUCTION

This one-act sociodrama in three parts will explore the tensions and conflicting values in post-Mao China as centered in a single family. The characters are composites drawn from current reading and interviews held with Chinese students and adults in the summer of 1986.

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will:

1. Develop an awareness of conflicting values in post-Mao China by participating in a one-act sociodrama.
2. Understand the rapid changes in values in post-Mao China from one generation to the next.
3. Be able to compare value changes and conflicts in their own society with those of post-Mao China.

TEACHING TIME: two class periods

MATERIALS

"Eating Bitterness" (Handout 16)

PROCEDURE

DAY 1

1. Students may either read the play "off the cuff" or preferably read the play in advance with practice sessions for a more finished presentation.

2. On the presentation day, give xerox copies of the first two scenes to each student.

3. Have participants read the first two scenes.

4. Ask students how they think the play might end. Have them form groups to discuss: 1) possible conclusions, 2) possible conflict resolutions.

5. Assign each student to write a one-page conclusion to the play.

DAY 2

6. Have students get in groups and read their essays to each other.

7. Have participants dramatize (act out) scene three. Have students compare their own conclusions with the play's ending.

8. Conclude with a discussion on changing values in China and the U.S.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Have students prepare and act out a sociodrama exploring conflicting values in the U.S.

2. Show slide film or videotape on life in contemporary China.

EATING BITTERNESS
by Stan Seaberg

INTRODUCTION

The recounting of "eating bitterness" has been an important feature of China's revolutionary tradition. It is quite simply the telling by older Chinese of their sufferings under the traditional landlord/gentry system so that younger generations will understand the meaning of China's revolution.

As used in this sociodrama, the inverted phrase "Eating Bitterness" carries an ironic flavor. Certain family members have eaten their bitter past, kept it hidden, for the sake of family unity. The parents in particular have kept secret their painful experiences during the Cultural Revolution mainly because any discussion would expose unhealed wounds and unrevealed conflicts.

Spoiled Daughter, raised during the new era of consumerism, individual incentives and greater personal freedoms, has difficulties relating to her parents' values and those of Cynical Brother whose life experiences have been radically different from her own. In sum, the older family members have all been scarred in different ways by the violent, wrenching events of the Cultural Revolution, even Grandma Tradition who rejects the worlds of her family to find sustenance in her own memory.

CAST OF CHARACTERS: THE CONTRADICTION FAMILY

Spoiled Daughter is a seventeen-year-old attending the Beijing Normal University Attached Senior Middle School. As a "key school" it is one of the top college preparatory schools in the nation. Only students with test scores in the 98th percentile are accepted. Spoiled Daughter is bright, articulate, and questioning. She enjoys western classical and some of the new rock music, cinema and TV. She has a few close friends with whom she shares a limited amount of free time. Her rigorous studies consume most of her waking time. Given she is her family's bright hope for the future she has been given considerable freedom by her parents.

Cynical Brother is a twenty-eight-year-old factory worker and unpublished poet. He did not finish high school because of violent disruptions during the Cultural Revolution. In his senior year he was sent to the countryside with many of his classmates to "learn from the peasants." He stayed in the countryside for eight years. Thus, he missed the chance for university training. He is understandably bitter about this experience. He tends to be quiet, moody and cynical. Only recently did he obtain a job in a bicycle factory. His return has sparked Spoiled Daughter's interest in Cultural Revolution.

Father Compromise is a professor of electrical engineering at prestigious Xinhua University. During the Cultural Revolution, he was accused by students and Red Guard factions of being "rightist" and "bourgeois." To salvage his own career he wrote letters of accusation against several colleagues and denounced others publicly. In spite of these suppliant and cowardly acts, he was dismissed from his post for one year and assigned to factory work in order to cleanse the corrupting disease of bourgeois ambition.

Mother Courage is a former writer of children´s books and currently a high school English teacher. During the Cultural Revolution, her books were banned as "capitalist trash" and she was forbidden to write. She was publicly denounced and sent to the countryside for three years to correct her capitalistic and upper class thinking. She was politically rehabilitated with the post-Mao government but to this day has refused to resume writing.

Grandma Tradition came to maturity after the first revolution of 1911. She is an educated woman who reveres Sun Yat Sen as the true founder of modern China, but accepts with some reservations the new communist order as preferable to imperial China or the corrupt regime of Chiang Kai Shek. Still, she bridges past and present with ambivalence. The violent disruptions in her family´s life have driven her inward in order to survive. She talks to herself continuously and recently has taken to mimicry. Her grandchildren revere her as a loveable but "dingy" old traditionalist.

EATING BITTERNESS

SCENE ONE

SETTING: A modest but well-furnished apartment which in America would be called middle class. The rooms are, however, much smaller than in a comparable place in the U.S. with fewer accessories. The Contradiction family does have a TV, washing machine, refrigerator and other furnishings which by Chinese standards mark the family as members of a small but growing elite.

Scene one opens with the Contradiction Family at evening dinner, the only meal when their busy schedules allow them to eat together.

Spoiled Daughter enters with a slightly defiant look -- perhaps to cover her fear of Father's displeasure.

Father: (Sternly) You're late again, Spoiled Daughter, where have you been?

Mother: She's been...

Daughter: (Interrupting) I was doing my usual three hours of homework at Girlfriend's house. I can't always be exactly on time if I have to cook my brains with school and homework twelve hours a day. My head feels like it's full of fried noodles half the time!

(Grandma shakes her head around and twists an index finger in each ear.)

Mother: (Looks at Father) It's true...she works terribly hard at her studies.

Brother: (Cynically) Huh! When I passed Girlfriend's house an hour ago I could hear that TV soap opera screeching right through the brick walls!

Daughter: (Glaring at Brother) Liar!

Father: (Ignoring Brother's comment) Work! Work! Work! Kids today don't know what it's like to really work. What's happened to our revolutionary vocabulary of study, struggle, work and labor? Life is too easy. Unless everyone knows how to work, the Four Modernizations will be meaningless words. As Chairman Mao has said, "Work purifies thought and action."

(Brother rolls his eyes around. Grandma mimics him)

Daughter: Chairman Mao! Chairman Mao! That's all I hear from you

Papa. I can't even remember Chairman Mao. He might as well be Confucius for all I know about him!

Father: (Rises sharply and strikes table -- his tone is one of disbelief.) You don't remember Chairman Mao? What's wrong with you? What are they teaching you in your famous Key School?

(He pauses to glare at Daughter. His face is puffy red with anger. Grandma puts her hands on hips and glares at Father in mock mimicry, puffing out her cheeks.)

Father: Shame on you, Spoiled Daughter! Shame on you!

(Daughter covers her face and rushes from the table overturning a chair. Mother follows her quickly.)

Father: (Looks at Brother in disbelief) What's wrong with your sister? You never acted like this. What's happening in the schools?

Brother: (Raises head and looks at Father) Schools are different now, Father. Kids don't spend half their time studying politics and doing factory work. They really have to grind their heads off. Daughter spends most of her time studying for tests. It's not like when I was in school -- when there was a school. (He pauses as if uncertain whether he should continue, looks away from Father, continues...) Politics is dead. Ask Sister about the latest pop singer or film star, not about Chairman Mao.

Father: (Distastefully) UGH! western popular music. What a horrible corruption -- worse than the old famines and epidemics. It's going to ruin China's youth. Mark my words!

(Mother quickly escorts Daughter to the dinner table. Daughter, subdued, sits down and resumes eating. Mother looks pleadingly at Father and gestures for silence. Brother looks at Daughter and snorts derisively.)

Father: (Ignoring wife) Well, Spoiled Daughter, what do you have to say for yourself?

Daughter: (Looks at Mother) I'm sorry, Father.

Father: (Glares at Daughter, speaks sternly.) Sorry! Is that all you can say? Tell me what you are sorry for!

Brother: (Looks up sharply) For heaven's sake, Papa. Cut out the self-criticism crap. That stuff went out with the Gang of Four. Leave her alone. The Cultural Revolution is as dead as Chairman Mao.

Father: (Incredulous, he throws up his hands.) What's this? I'm mocked and criticized and lectured to in my own house? I get no respect? What's happening?

(Grandma raises her hands in mimicry and looks around the table. Daughter looks gratefully at Brother who quickly lowers his head and eats furiously.)

Mother: (Firmly) I think we've done enough talking for one meal. Let's allow Daughter to eat a little or she won't have a brain left to cook.

(Father grunts his disapproval but turns to eating. Brother keeps his head low and winks at Daughter. Grandma sees the wink and then winks at Father. The Contradiction Family eats quietly for a few minutes.)

Daughter: (Looking around the table) I wish someone would be honest with me.

(The four family members raise their heads in surprise and drop their chopsticks.)

Father: (Sternly) What do you mean, Daughter? Explain yourself!

Mother: (Quickly and a bit fearfully) Yes, dear. Haven't we always answered your questions and given you everything you've needed? What's wrong?

(Brother smiles, drops his head and continues eating.)

Daughter: Well, what I mean is...the teachers and adults tell us how bad the Cultural Revolution was and how rotten the Gang of Four was but no one tells us what really happened -- unless you think slogans are answers. All of you lived through the Cultural Revolution. Why can't you tell me what happened? I want to know.

(A pronounced silence falls over the table. Surprise, shock and uncertainty are evident. Mother, Father and Brother look at each other. Grandma looks at each in turn and shakes her head.)

Daughter: (Looks around the table) See! You're no different from my teachers. Why don't you say something -- anything? Don't just sit there like a bunch of sea urchins!

Brother: (Savagely) Shut up, Sis! Why do we have to talk just to please you? Can't you respect peoples' feelings? Maybe they -- we -- don't want to talk about it right now.

Daughter: (Insistently) But why?

Brother: (Angry, enunciates each word) Shut up, damn it, shut up!

(Brother half rises from his seat as curtain closes.)

CURTAIN

SCENE 2

SETTING: Daughter's bedroom just before dawn. She is stirring restlessly, moaning and groaning, flopping her arms about and turning from side to side. Every few seconds she emits strange strangled cries as if she is trying to scream but can't get the sound out of her throat. She is dreaming.

Narrator: Daughter's dream is a scene from Beijing opera. All of the characters are in traditional costume. Two powerful warlords are engaged in a life or death struggle. Father Compromise is clashing his sword against the swirling spear of a giant general. Around the prancing warlords, armed warriors flash their swords and spears with lightning speed, whirling, ducking, leaping and cartwheeling. Suddenly the giant general roars and forces Father Compromise to his knees. His armies fall back. He begs for mercy and kisses the general's foot. The giant warlord raises a sword to decapitate his foe.

At the moment of death a beautiful woman warrior intervenes. She leaps high overhead and smashes the sword of the giant warlord. He and his armies fall back defeated. The warrior woman turns and smiles; it is Mother Courage.

Then one by one, Father Compromise slices off the hands and heads of his opponents. The concubines are paraded and distributed to deserving warriors. The victorious Father Compromise grabs the most beautiful concubine by the hair and cruelly twists her neck. Her diamond eyes flare with anger. It is Mother Courage. She leaps to her feet with drawn sword in hand. Too late. Already her arms are pinioned by muscular guards. Her head is slowly forced to the ground.

Daughter: (Tries to scream but her cries are strangled) Mama! Mama! Mama!

Narrator: The warlord, Father Compromise, quickly slices off Warrior Woman's hands and then beheads her. Fountains of blood from the stumps of her wrists and neck spurt into beautiful sprays of red and purple flowers. Warrior Woman's separated hands claw and reach out. Her decapitated head screams: "My baby! My baby!"

Daughter: (Her strangled cries are finally unleashed) Mama! Mama!

(Mother Courage holds her daughter lightly, folding the blanket around her flailing arms.)

Mother: Hush...hush now, my darling. Mama's here...Everything is alright. Hush now...that's better...you've just had a bad dream.

(Mother Courage tries to tuck Daughter back in bed but she cries and clings desperately to her mother.)

Daughter: No, Mama...please...don't leave me. I'm scared. I don't want to be alone.

Mother: Alright, darling. I'll stay right here. Tell me about your dream.

Daughter: No, no...please, Mama..no. It was so horrible. I want to forget about it. Please make it go away.

(Daughter starts crying again.)

Mother: If you tell me your dream darling, I can help you make it go away. But you have to tell it to me.

(Daughter calms down and describes her dream in halting phrases. As she concludes, Mother Courage turns her head and cries silently, holding fiercely to her daughter.)

Daughter: Mama! What's wrong? You're crying.

Mother: No, not really. I'm just too emotional I guess.

Daughter: (Protesting) No, Mama, what are you talking about? You're not emotional at all. This is the first time I've seen you cry in years.

Mother: (Turns towards window) Look, it's getting light already. I've got to prepare my lessons and steam the breakfast buns. Lie down, now. I'll wake you in an hour.

Daughter: (Sleepily) But Mama, you promised to make the bad dream go away...you promised...you prom...

(Mother tucks blanket around Daughter and tiptoes out.)

CURTAIN

SCENE 3

SETTING: The Contradiction Family is at dinner. All of them are eating except Daughter who seems too agitated. She nibbles briefly, then looks around quickly and returns to her soup. She avoids looking at Father. When she does, finally, Daughter burst into tears.

Father: (Demanding) What is it? What's wrong? What's going on in this crazy household? Now tell me, Daughter, what's wrong? (He yells.) Stop crying!

Mother: (Placing her finger over lips) SSHH...calm down. Daughter had a bad dream last night.

Father: (Shouting) Bad dream! I can't believe this! So what! We all have bad dreams. What's wrong with this crazy generation? Dreams! Dreams! Sometimes I'd like to chop her head open to see what's inside.

(Daughter bursts into tears at Father's last comment.)

Grandma: (Looks sharply at Father, speaks slowly and softly) Dreams are very important. They tell us more about ourselves than our waking times. (She reaches out and takes Daughter's hand.) Tell us about your dream, child. It's very important. You must get it out to heal this family.

(Daughter describes her dream.)

Grandma: (Looks sternly at Father and says very firmly) Now tell your story, my son.

Father: (Spreads his hands in disbelief) Mother, what are you talking about? Belief in dreams is an old wives' tale. We don't live in a dream world. We live in the world of socialist reality not in the old society of myth and make-believe. What has happened to your old revolutionary ideals, Mama?

Grandma: (Unflinching) Tell us your story, son, or we can never heal this family's sickness. It's very important; we can't leave until you tell your story.

Father: (Lifting head) Look, in my position I have to compromise all the time, otherwise I wouldn't be here and neither would the rest of you. I've had to dismiss colleagues for dangerous thoughts and demote others for political unreliability. If I hadn't done it, someone else would have. The Party ordered it. Besides, if I hadn't, rightists and reactionaries would have eventually destroyed the revolution. All we fought for would have been lost. I had to do it. That's reason enough.

Brother: (Reacts abruptly and violently) No, it's not enough and you know it! You denounced your own wife as a rightist!

Mother: (Breaks in quickly) He had to do it. We wouldn't be together as a family if he hadn't. You must understand.

Brother: (Interrupts violently) Are we really together? Is it better to lie for the sake of false unity and, of course, enjoy all these material goodies (looks around) or is it better to tell the truth and be true -- even if one has to suffer and live in poverty? What would Chairman Mao say about that?

Father: (Angrily) This whole thing is ridiculous. You heard your mother. I've nothing to be ashamed of. I did what I had to do under the circumstances. That's all there is to it!!

Brother: (Rises to his feet with tears streaming down his face. He blurts his words into broken halting sentences.) Look at your beautiful wife, old fool. Can't you see she's headless and has no hands? You cut them off...Mama was one of the great talents of her generation...then she let a few flowers bloom...not a hundred, no, just a few...then WHAP! (Brother strikes both wrists in turn, hatchet fashion, with his hands) Off came her beautiful hands. Even without hands she grew beautiful flowers -- all of those wonderful stories she told me as a child. How can I ever forget them? Then -- again -- during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. WHAP! (chops at his neck) Off came her beautiful head (points directly at Father) and you did it, Papa. I saw you cut off her head. You denounced your wife in front of two thousand screaming robots. You cut off her beautiful head, you rightist reactionary. You...you...you!

(Cynical Brother abruptly turns and runs from the room. Spoiled Daughter raises her head and turns to Mother Courage. They quickly embrace and hold each other tightly. Grandma Tradition fixes her son, Father Compromise, with a fierce aggravating stare. Grandma Tradition smiles and looks benignly on Mother Courage and Spoiled Daughter.)

FINAL CURTAIN

LESSON 9
REVIEW AND EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

In this lesson, student groups will present a review of the lessons covered in class. Group grades will be averaged to give an overall class grade. It is our feeling that with the students putting together their group reports, presenting them, and asking questions of presenting groups that the learning has a better chance of entering into the long term memory banks. Of course individual grades may also be given.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Review lessons covered in class.
2. Ask students to collaborate to prepare group reports.
3. Present group reports with each member contributing to preparation and presentation.
4. Encourage all class members to do well as part of their grade depends on them.

TEACHING TIME: two class periods

PROCEDURE

DAY 1

1. Teacher should list lessons covered in class on the chalk board or overhead. Have the groups request which one they choose to report to class on or teacher assigns them -- one per group.

2. Tell groups to plan a presentation to be presented the following day to the entire class. Each person must work on planning, preparation, and presentation. Their presentations should include what they have learned. Pictures, graphs, maps or any type of visual or other resource that enhances the presentation are encouraged. Give the groups 5 minutes to brainstorm what form their presentation will take. Remind students that any group member may be called on to report and that no person may answer again until all members have had a turn. It is in everyone´s interest to be sure that each member understands and agrees with the answer, as their grades all depend on one another.

3. Call on a spokesperson from each group to share with the class the presentation method they are considering.

4. After all groups have shared their ideas, give them 5 minutes to assign roles and tasks and make final decisions about the methods they will use.

5. Now tell the groups to work on their reports. Encourage them

to share resources and information with other groups. Have each group turn in a brief statement at the end of the period describing their presentation for the following day. Tell them to have each member of the group sign it.

6. Remind students that encouraging statements, positive interaction and participation will help everyone. Telephone calls by class members are recommended.

DAY 2

1. Have the groups make their presentations. After each group´s presentation, encourage questions from other groups. Encourage a 1 to 2 minute discussion after each one.